

**DWELLING SPACE IN THE SUDAN:
OFFICIAL POLICIES AND TRADITIONAL NORMS**

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Hashim K. Mahgoub

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Department of Architecture
University of Edinburgh**

**CONTAINS
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physiological comfort, the choice is affected mainly by cultural forces and traditional norms.

According to what is said above if we investigate and compare two culturally dissimilar nomadic tribes who live in the same area and practice similar economic activities this should allow us to demonstrate the strong impact of culture on the organization of their dwelling space. It will allow us also to show how each tribe organize this space to support its economy, cope with weather conditions and satisfy social and cultural needs in an integrated manner.

The Hadendowa Beja indigenous tribe of the eastern Sudan,⁽¹⁾ and the Rashaidda who migrated to this region from the Arabian peninsula about a century ago,⁽²⁾ were selected for close examination. Both tribes are nomadic people whose economy relies mainly on animal husbandry and small scale seasonal cultivation.⁽³⁾ Despite the fact that the territories of the various branches and clans of the two tribes are widely scattered throughout the eastern region, both of them live side by side in a specific part of this region (Fig. 6.1.). In this area, which is located approximately between latitude 15° and latitude 16° North and longitude 36° and longitude 36° East, the two tribes share with other tribes living there the natural resources of the region part of which they use to construct their tents.

In the area in which the two tribes live together, extreme weather conditions make life uncomfortable during certain parts of

the year. During March and April it becomes very hot, temperatures may rise up to 42°C. Yet, the winter nights during January and February can be very chilly, the temperature may drop to about 16°C. Although the annual rainfall in this region is about 200 mm, the rainy season does not extend over more than ten weeks. As a result, there are sometimes heavy downpours during August which may exceed 120 mm and this makes life uncomfortable. The dust storms, the effect of which is aggravated by the type of clay soil in the area, are also one of the main elements of discomfort.⁽⁴⁾ Accordingly, as they design and construct their tents, the people of the two tribes have to take into consideration all these undesirable effects of the climate.

The area in which the two tribes live is a flat clay plain with scattered hills. During the rainy season the ground is covered by grasses which grow up to a height of 30 or 60 cm. By January the grasses become dry and the nomads move towards the few available grazing areas located around permanent water sources. Thorny scrub also grows in this region but woods are restricted only to the beds and banks of seasonal streams.⁽⁵⁾

The natural local materials in the region which can be used to make and construct the mobile dwellings of the two tribes are, to a great extent, similar. The stems and branches of the accasia trees can be used as structural members for the tent. Regarding these structural members, the wool of the camels and goats and parts of the palm trees are suitable for making ropes which are needed as extra support for the tent. In addition, the wool and palm fronds

can provide the tent cloth as they can be woven into woollen rugs and straw mats.

The Hadendowa and Rashaidaa who live together in the same area and practice similar economic activities differ radically from one another in terms of their socio-cultural characteristics. If we take the attachment the various clans and lineages of the tribe have to their territory, for instance, the right of these social units to their land is considered one of the major concerns of the Hadendowa. Moreover, this has a significant impact on the social and economic life of the people.⁽⁶⁾ On the other hand, the lineages and extended families of the Rashaidaa have very little attachment to any specific area in the whole territory of the tribe. From one season to another they may camp in different areas because pasture and water are more available or perhaps the senior man administering the camp's affairs has high managing capability. In addition, a Rashaidaa extended family may change its camping site because its relationship with its neighbours, who may in fact be close relatives, has become strained.⁽⁷⁾

The two tribes differ also in an important social characteristic which is reflected in their dwelling environment. The Hadendowa live in big social groups each consisting of a lineage.⁽⁸⁾ Despite the dispersal of the tents of each lineage over a wide area social ties are very strong between its members. Beyond the limits of these lineages, social ties are also strong between the various lineages of each clan and the several clans forming the whole tribe.⁽⁹⁾

Social ties among members of the Rashaidaa extended family are very strong. If the circumstances permit, such a family usually form an autonomous camp.⁽¹⁰⁾ However, social ties beyond the boundaries of the family are weak. The relationship between families belonging to the same lineage, or within various lineages forming one of the three branches of which the whole tribe is composed are not based on social basis alone. The mutual benefits and practical gains expected by the lineage, branch of the tribe or the whole tribe, in this case, are given also a special consideration.⁽¹¹⁾

The position of the woman in the society is also a main cultural difference between the two tribes. Both tribes are Moslem, and this is reflected in the requirements regarding the protection of women. Due to the nomadic lifestyle of the two tribes most of the men have to move around with their herds leaving the women alone in the camp. As a result, the protection of women is becoming a more difficult task, and, yet, despite all these similarities each of the two tribes has been dealing with this situation in a different way.

The Hadendowa believe that women are weak and accordingly should be very well protected.⁽¹²⁾ This is considered the responsibility of the whole camp community as any wrongdoing by any one of its women will bring shame on all its members.⁽¹³⁾ Marriage is expensive for the relatively poor tribesmen.⁽¹⁴⁾ This extends the critical period of time during which an adolescent unmarried girl has to be well protected. The tribespeople ensure this by certain means, one of which is the organization of dwelling space in a certain manner as described in Chapter Three Part 3.2.2.

Marriage is also expensive for the Rashaidaa men. This means that men have to work hard for a long period of time in order to secure the bride's dowry. As a result, there are many cases in which old men are married to very young women.⁽¹⁵⁾ This imbalance in age makes the supervision and protection of the young immature wives, in a nomadic society where men have had to wait a very long time before getting married, a very difficult task. This task is considered in the main the responsibility of the extended family.⁽¹⁶⁾ The practice of polygamy by the tribe makes this task much more easy. The co-wives of the Rashaidaa man are accommodated next to each other.⁽¹⁷⁾ By means of this type of co-residence a co-wife, who may be fifty years in age, supervises another co-wife who may not be more than fifteen years old. Through this and other means the Rashaidaa ensure the protection of their women but in this respect differ greatly from the Hadendowa tribe as described below.

Despite the fact that both tribes are Moslem, each one of them complies with the requirements of their religion in a different way. The two tribes differ also in their ability to speak Arabic, the language of the Quran. While the Rashaidaa are Arabic speaking people most of the Hadendowa speak only their indigenous language. This has a great effect upon the religious education of children.⁽¹⁸⁾ It affects also the interaction of the two tribes with other people living in the eastern part of the country, as those who are non-Beja are Arabic speaking.

In addition to these aspects referred to above, there are also other cultural variations. The tribal costume of women is one p. 86

example⁽¹⁹⁾ (Plates 6.1. to 6.4.). The type of tent used by each tribe is another example. Despite the similar local building material available to them, and other similar circumstances under which they live - such as climate and economy - their tents differ in size, shape, structure and also the type of tent cloth used as explained in Chapter Three Parts 3.2.2 and 3.2.6. (Plates 6.5 and 6.6).

With regards to the cultural characteristics referred to above, there is a great deal of agreement between the Hadendowa and other Beja nomadic groups - the Amarar, Besharin and Beni Amir. This can be explained by the fact that in origin they all belong to the same population stock - the Beja.⁽²⁰⁾ It is also evident in various characteristics of their dwelling space.⁽²¹⁾ Accordingly, the Hadendowa can be considered, to a great extent, representative of these other Beja tribes. This tribe was chosen because it is the one which has been best investigated and documented.

What has been said above about the Hadendowa and Rashaidaa and their nomadic lifestyles indicates that their close examination can allow us to test and demonstrate the research approach. However, the case of these two tribes is not unique as there are many cases of ethnically and culturally dissimilar tribes who live side by side in various parts of the Sudan. The Ingessena and Rufaa el Hoi in the central eastern parts; the Nuba and Hwazmaa in the central western part; and the Dinka and Reziegat in the western part are some examples of Animistic Negroid tribes who live in the same area with others who are Moslem Arabized.⁽²²⁾

The examination of the Hadendowa and Rashaidda is mainly concerned with establishing the relationship between socio-cultural characteristics and organization of dwelling space at various levels of the overall settlement and housing environment. To accomplish this, the examination is based on several investigations undertaken by many researchers and administrators which cover various aspects of the nomadic lifestyle of the two tribes. In addition, it is based on field studies undertaken by the author as part of the preparation for this thesis. These field studies investigated the two tribes in the area referred to above (Chapter 6 p.2.) where they live side by side.

The field studies covering the Hadendowa tribe have examined them in their nomadic camps at the outskirts of Kassala, as well as those around Waggar (Fig. 6.1.). On the other hand, those covering the Rashaidda investigated their nomadic lifestyle as they lived at the outskirts of Kassala. They investigated them also in their rainy season camps near the railway station of Al Hajiz and their dry season camps at the banks of the River Atbara near Khashm el Girba Dam (Fig. 6.1.). The field studies were undertaken during several visits which took place between December 1982 and October 1986. Data was collected through personal observation and unstructured interviews.

The main aim of this chapter is to examine the dwelling environments of these two tribes with the intention of showing how they organize space in order to secure their livelihood, cope with weather conditions and satisfy their social and cultural needs in a

simple and integrated manner. Borrowing the terminology of Martin Heidegger, the chapter aims to show how these tribes organize space to assemble the foursome – gods, men, sky and earth – in a single fold. The examination and description of dwelling space is undertaken along the same lines of the method developed and presented in Chapter Five Part 5.4. Accordingly, the overall settlement and housing environment is considered level by level. It starts with the level of geography and finishes with that of the furniture and domestic appliances located inside individual rooms. At each one of these levels, the examination and description consider how certain places, paths and domains are generated through spatial relations, such as centralization and enclosure – in order to satisfy economic, environmental and socio-cultural demands. Besides identifying the general characteristics of space at each level, the nature of interaction between various mental levels is also considered.

This chapter has three main parts. The first and second deal separately with the traditional dwelling environments of the Hadendowa and Rashaidda tribes. The third and last part compares and shows how each tribe organizes space in a different but integrated manner in order to serve economic, environmental, social and cultural objectives. Through this last part, an attempt is made to demonstrate the validity of the approach to dwelling space formulated in Chapter Five.

6.2. TRADITIONAL DWELLING SPACE OF THE HADENDOWA TRIBE: AN INTERPRETATION AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION.

6.2.1. THE LEVEL OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL REGION: THE TERRITORY OF THE WHOLE TRIBE.

Living in the eastern region of the Sudan, the Hadendowa tribe feels a strong sense of belonging to the other four Beja tribes - the Amarrar, Beni Amir, Besharin and Halanga - with whom they share the region. This feeling is augmented by the common history of struggle against foreigners who have been exploiting the region since the time of the Pharaohs,⁽²³⁾ and by the various cultural similarities between the different Beja tribes of which the traditional settlement layout and house type is but one. Despite incidents of wars and skirmishes between these tribes, the tribal legal system and their high respect for law and order has always been an effective means of reconciliation.

Elements of cohesion among the various clans of the Hadendowa tribe, are very strong and even unique in comparison to many other Sudanese tribes. This is indicated by the political system which assigns specific offices or tasks to certain clans according to their talents and capacity. For example, the warlike Gemilab, Shaboidinab and Mahmoudalihadab clans are located at the northern frontiers of the tribe in order to check encroachment of the Beni Amir and Bisharin Beja and Shukria Arab tribes.⁽²⁵⁾ Cohesion of the tribe and co-operation between its various clans, is also indicated by assignment of political leadership to the Wailaliab clan and religious leadership to the Samarar.⁽²⁶⁾

Within this socio-political system, the various clans of the

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Hadendowa live together in their country, each in a territory ^{by} clearing demarked by elements of landscape, such as seasonal streams and ranges of hills (Figs. 6.2.). The survival of the tribe, despite the meagre resources available in its territory, stands as a clear indication of the high level of co-ordination between its clans. The fact that each clan is allocated one territory in the mountainous Red Sea coastal area and another in the fertile Gash delta, contributed immensely to their survival⁽²⁷⁾ (Fig. 6.3.). It has enabled each clan to benefit from winter rainfall in the former area, as well as, summer rainfall in the latter. The difference in the nature and landscape of the two areas has also contributed to the survival of the tribe. While the fertile soil of the Gash delta supports their economy and subsistence through agriculture, the tricky glens of the Red Sea hills provide them with an excellent hiding place in times of war.⁽²⁸⁾

The spatial organization of the subordinate domains accommodating the various Hadendowa clans, considered together with the paths which link them to each other, expresses the whole country of the tribe as a single domain. Integration of the elements of natural landscaping with their settlements, augments this expression, which consequently reveals basic facts about the way in which this tribe exists.⁽²⁹⁾ It reveals how they pursue their agricultural and animal husbandry activities and make the best of the climate to ensure its productivity, yet without sacrificing their cultural and social integrity. The high concern of the tribe about these objectives is indicated by the wars which they fought in order to check the encroachment of strangers into their country. It

is also indicated by their choice of sites for their camps as will be revealed in the following section.

6.2.2. THE LEVEL OF THE NOMADIC CAMP: THE TERRITORY OF INDIVIDUAL LINEAGES.

The Hadendowa choose remote and isolated sites for their camps. As well as being remote, the camp is usually set within trees,⁽³⁰⁾ or behind a hill; and thus is barely visible to passer-by. The choice of such locations expresses one important aspect of the life of the tribe. It expresses a determination to extend authority all over their country, and a desire to manipulate the resources of this country, without exhausting them by clustering in central and fertile areas. By extending their camps throughout the country, the Hadendowa derive the maximum benefits from climate and vegetation as previously indicated. But besides such economic and environmental benefits, the location of the camps also express the aloofness and deep suspicion of the Hadendowa towards strangers which has developed as a result of a long history of wars and exploitation by those strangers.⁽³¹⁾ The remote sites of the camps also express the deep concern of the tribe for the privacy of their women; an aspect which strongly affects the dwelling space of this tribe, as will be explained when we examine lower levels of this space.

Considered as a place, the Hadendowa camp has a clear point of entry through which outsiders approach the camp. This entrance is marked by the guest tree and Quranic school, located at the

forefront of the camp (Figs. 6.4. and 6.5.), and used for receiving and accommodating guests. This arrangement keeps the guests at bay and thus ensures more privacy for the women in the tents. Moreover, the creation of this entrance gives the camp a sense of direction, such as front and back, and generates a gradient of privacy; the area at the back enjoying maximum privacy (Figs. 6.5. and 6.6.) to the extent that it is usually used as open air toilets for the women of the camp.

The guest tree and Quranic school constitute one of the main domains of the camp and it is here that guests are received and are accommodated. The provision of this domain and its location in this place expresses a significant and basic aspect of the social life of the tribe. Through news received from the guests about the situation of rainfall and condition of pasture in remote parts of the country, residents of the camp can increase their agricultural and animal production. This achieved, for example, by sending their animals or moving the whole camp to another place. Through such visits, the lineage inhabiting the camp strengthen social ties with other lineages of the clan and thus ensure control over their territory. This process of socialization acquires a special significance because it introduces the children of the lineage, who study in the Quranic schools, to their visiting kinsmen. The children, as they serve the visitors, attend to what is going on within the guest's domain, which in many cases involves settlement of tribal disputes, and thus they receive their first lesson in the art of litigation mastered by this tribe.⁽³²⁾ Receiving the guest in those public places indicates the high level of co-operation between households

of the camp and spares the needy and those who have no children, from embarrassment; as the guests are fed by the available food in the camp and served by the boys attending at the Quranic school. Moreover, creation of the guest domain also secures the privacy of the women of the households; a very highly regarded value.

The canopies and shelters of the young and unmarried men located at the edge of the camp constitute another important domain (Fig. 6.3. Plates 6.7. and 6.8.). Through the social life in this domain the young men organize their work and depart to the countryside to cultivate the land and rear the animals. From the countryside they return with the produce which secures the life of all the households of the camp including those without fields or animals and those who have no grown up sons. From this produce, the guests at the Quranic school are also generously fed. From their location at the camp edge, the shelters of the young men serve as observation posts and a protection belt and thus contribute to the security of the camp in another way.

Accommodation of the young men in these places relieves the congestion in the tents of their households and provides them with the fresh air of the open countryside which is necessary for their development at this age. It also permits more privacy for the women in the households. The Hadendowa separate the boys from their mothers at an early age.⁽³³⁾ The transition of the boys from the Quranic school to the shelters of the young men is considered an act of initiation into manhood (Plate 6.5. and 6.6.) which is a highly regarded tribal value. At those shelters, near to the countryside

trees under which his afterbirth was buried,⁽³⁴⁾ the boy receives his first lesson in herding and the use of the stick and sword (Plate 6.9.). Through recital of the poetry of the tribe, repetition of its legends, and by listening to recorded folk songs (Plate 6.10.), the Hadendowa boy becomes impregnated by the culture of his people.

Accommodation of the men of the camp and the guests in the domains and places mentioned above secures a high level of privacy for the women in the households. Restriction of the women to the tents, where their afterbirth was buried,⁽³⁵⁾ is regulated by relieving them from undertaking any task outside the camp. Left with plenty of time, they spend their days carrying out the housework in a co-operative manner and trying hard to manage the meagre resources in order to feed the boys and guests, the young men and batchelors, and the men of the house.

In addition to all these tasks, the women still find time to weave woollen rugs and straw mats for the tent of a daughter who will get married soon.⁽³⁶⁾ During their toil with the hard household work, inside the poorly ventilated tents, the very light tribal costume⁽³⁷⁾ (Plates 6.1. and 6.2.) enables the Hadendowa women to withstand the heat of the day. But working in this costume could not have been permitted by the extremely conservative Hadendowa if their women were not well segregated from the men.

Besides the path that leads the visitors to the guest tree and

Quranic school, there is also another important one which links the camp to the wells (Fig. 6.4.). Its location serves many purposes. It separates the tents from the guest domain and thus permits more privacy for the women. By creating an open space around the guest tree and Quranic school it enhances the ventilation of those places. Moreover, the old men of the camp usually spend their day under the guest tree and from this location they can easily supervise and advice the young men as they bring water from the wells.⁽³⁸⁾

Despite dispersal of its individual households (Plate 6.11.), which may be separated by 100 m,⁽³⁹⁾ the Hadendowa camp is conceived by its residents as one social unit. This is not achieved only by defining the camp by landscape elements such as woods and hills but also through the various domains which bond its residents together through strong social links and important cultural values.

The internal organization and interaction between the main domains and paths of the Hadendowa camp expresses important aspects of the life and existence of the tribe. It reveals that the endeavour of the tribe to cultivate their land and raise their animals, and its attempt to cope with the hot climate and semi-arid landscape, are integrated with its most highly valued aims to secure maximum privacy for its women; to rear its boys to become responsible and courageous men and to provide hospitality to its guests. It also shows that these objectives are pursued through the co-ordinated efforts of all the extended families who inhabit the camp.

6.2.3. THE LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL HOUSEHOLDS: USUALLY ACCOMMODATING EXTENDED FAMILIES.

Individual tents constituting an extended family household may be separated by ten or fifteen metres (Plate 6.12.) despite the fact that they may accommodate very closely related persons, such as a man and his brother or son-in-law, or widowed mother.⁽⁴⁰⁾ Yet, physical separation here does not imply weak social relations, on the contrary, social links between the elementary families of such household are usually very strong.

The strong social links here are demonstrated by the cases of divorced or widowed women who may live within the extended household. The tent built for them at the marriage time remain their property according to tribal norms,⁽⁴¹⁾ and support of their livelihood is considered the responsibility of the household and the whole lineage. On the other hand these women, by living within the household, undertake a very important and sensitive responsibility by the standards of the tribe: that is, the bringing up of the girls of the extended family. The significance of this role is indicated by the very high regard of the Hadendowa for the protection of their girls and the high concern of the tribe to initiate those girls into womanhood through a close kinswoman other than the mother. The significance of the residence of the widowed and divorced kinswomen within the household is indicated by the fact that they are not entrusted with this responsibility if they live outside it.

The upbringing of boys and young men also unifies the

physically dispersed elementary families of the extended family household. This is indicated by the accommodation of the boys of the household together in the Quranic school where they receive their first lessons in reading, writing and Islamic religion. Accommodation of the young and unmarried men of the household together in the shelters assigned for this age group also strengthens social ties between elementary families of the household. Ties are strengthened further by the fact that milk and grain produced through the work of these young men are distributed to all families of the household, even those with no cows and fields. (42)

Receiving and entertaining the guests of all elementary families of the extended family household together at the guest tree and the Quranic school stands as another indicator of social cohesion within such households. With respect to those two communal places, we should also note the important role performed by the experienced old men of the households as they spend their days there. This is manifest in the underlying acculturation process that takes place as the old men stay with the boys in the Quranic school and hand over to them the oral traditions of the tribe. The role of the old men here is also manifested in the advice which they lend to the young men as they bring water from the wells. The social and cultural role performed by these old men here is similar to that undertaken by the old women with the girls at the households.

The composition and spatial organization of the Hadendowa household expresses basic facts about the life of the extended

family. Its composition reflects their determination to work as a co-operative group in order to make the best of the available resources.⁽⁴³⁾ It also reflects their determination to cope with the climate through their migration together from one area to another in the territory of the clan. The spatial organization shows also how they cope with the climatic conditions in another way. This is manifested in the dispersal of their tents which increases the level of ventilation and enhances the micro-climate especially as the households are usually set inside woods. In addition to satisfying these earthly requirements the composition and spatial organization of the household also meet important socio-cultural demands. The wide spacing of the tents of the household could also be justified by the high demand of privacy for elementary families inhabiting them.

6.2.4. THE LEVEL OF THE INDIVIDUAL TENT: USUALLY INHABITED BY AN ELEMENTARY FAMILY.

The isolation of individual tents of the household is augmented by their formal character and the way in which they interact with their surroundings. The fairly hemispherical shape of the tent, its single low entrance (usually less than a metre in height), and the fact that its openings or windows are located not more than 40 cm above ground level (Plates 6.13., Fig. 6.6.) grants it a strong sense of centrality and diminishes its interaction with other tents of the household.

Interaction inside the tent is also diminished, not only

because of its small size (usually between 3 to 4 metres in diameter), but also due to its hemispherical roof which limits the number of persons who can interact inside it (Figs. 6.6. and 6.7.). Interaction there is diminished also by the positioning of the vertical members supporting the tent roof (Fig. 6.8b., Plates 6.14. to 6.18.).

The single entrance of the tent gives it a strong sense of direction and divides its interior space into clearly demarked front and back which are characterized by varying degrees of privacy (Fig. 6.8. and Plates 6.19. and 6.20.). Division of the tent in this way is defined by the row of structural supports which run across the tent interior (Plates 6.14. and 6.19.). Structural supports running along the interior of the tent divide it also into right and left parts (Fig. 6.8a.). The full existential meaning of the spatial relations of the tent can only be grasped after we examine and understand the lower environmental level, that of the main things located inside such tents.

6.2.5. THE LEVEL OF THE THINGS: FURNITURE AND DOMESTIC APPLIANCES LOCATED INSIDE THE TENT.

Division of the tent into front and back parts also divides it into domains of two different activities. The ground of the front part is covered by a straw mat on which the woman of the house cooks and undertakes her housework (Fig. 6.7.). In this part she also meets women from her extended family household and other households of her lineage in order to discuss matters of the camp and manage

its limited resources. She may also meet here womenfolk over cups of coffee, in order to weave straw mats and woollen rugs of the tent which will soon be added to the household by the marriage of one of its daughters. The women carry on housework in this part of the tent and around it in a relaxed atmosphere interrupted only by children who take food to the men and guests' domains and fetch milk from the cattle enclosure located near the shelter of the young men.

When night approaches life starts at the most private rear part of the tent as the women begin to prepare the big bed which occupies it for receiving small children and the man of the house who will retire soon to the tent. When the man enters, he makes his way to the right side of the tent allocated for him and clearly demarked by the vertical supports⁽⁴⁴⁾ (Figs. 6.7. and 6.8.). As he arrives at that part of the tent and hangs his sword and knife over the right side of the big bed, his day with all its pursuits come to a close. At the same time, and as the man is united with his wife who retires to her place in the left side of the bed⁽⁴⁵⁾ (Figs. 6.7. and 6.8.), the woollen rug is dropped and the private part of the tent occupied by the raised bed is shut off from the less private, front part.

This dividing rug, considered together with the high level of the bed (about 50 cm high), low level of the entrance and window (Fig. 6.9.), and the relative isolation of the tents from each other ensures a great level of privacy. Under these circumstances, and as the rear part of the tent is separated from its front part, and the right part is joined with the left through the re-union of the man

of the house with his wife, another pursuit begins which also aims at strengthening the tribe, but this time through multiplying its population.

The basic relations controlling space inside the tent of the Hadendowa express several facets of their life and existence. For example, the careful screening of the tent secures privacy and protection for the women staying at home (Fig. 6.9.) and thus free the men to migrate in order to ensure high agricultural yield and animal production. In addition, its low openings facilitate good ventilation at lower levels during the hot hours of the day when the women gather in the front part of the tent (Fig. 6.10.). Poor ventilation at the rear is compatible with the use of this part, as the raised bed located in it is usually used during the relatively cool night time (Fig. 6.10.). Furthermore, the rounded shape of the roof helps to drain the heavy seasonal rain, and its humped back enables it to withstand strong winds.

The size, shape and openings of the Hadendowa tent reflects also deep concern about spiritual and socio-cultural demands. The hemispherical roof of the tent and its small size limits the number of persons who can interact within its boundaries (Fig. 6.6.). This is compatible with the social norms regarding the use of such tents. On the other hand, the raised rear part of the tent roof, considered together with the low level of the entrance and other openings, creates space over the bed side of the tent which can hardly be seen from outside (Fig. 6.9. and Plates 6.14. to 6.20.) and this ensures high levels of privacy. Accordingly, we may conclude that the type

of the Hadendowa tent is geared towards satisfying several economic, environmental and socio-cultural requirements all in a simple and integrated manner.

6.3. TRADITIONAL DWELLING SPACE OF THE RASHAIDAA TRIBE: AN INTERPRETATION AND PHENOMENOLOGICAL DESCRIPTION.

6.3.1. THE LEVEL OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL REGION: THE TERRITORY OF THE WHOLE TRIBE.

Despite the fact that the whole of the Rashaidda tribe live together in the eastern region of the country (Fig. 6.1.) and that various clans of the tribe are linked together by ethnic and cultural ties, there is, nevertheless, more than one sign which indicates that they do not concern themselves as a single social unit. Since the times of the Colonial rule, all efforts to administer the three main branches of the tribe by one chief has failed.⁽⁴⁶⁾ Moreover, the tribe also has no single religious leadership which may serve as an element of unification, as in case of the Hadendowa where such a role is performed by pious men associated with lineages or individual settlements. Also, involvement of the tribe in skirmishes with neighbouring tribes has not been on tribal or clannish basis, but rather of a local nature and, in most cases, fought by members of individual camps.⁽⁴⁷⁾

Regarding such fights and frictions, incidents which occurred between certain branches of the tribe could be considered as a sign of disunity. One example of this is the fighting between the

Zeniemat and Al Hawzma in Al Ratagaa settlement at the edge of New Halfa agricultural scheme in 1977 which consequently led to the separation of the two branches in different settlements. Another example is that of the fight which erupted between the Barsaa and Baratiekh in Mastura during the early seventies. As a result of this, the local authorities later rehoused each branch in a different housing area - Mansoura and Mastura.⁽⁴⁸⁾

The fact that the Rashaidaa has no right on grazing land or water points in the region may explain,⁽⁴⁹⁾ to a certain extent, the disunity and lack of strong sense of tribe and clan among this tribe. The case of the Hadendowa, in which the right over those resources serves as a major role in integrating the tribe and its various clans, may lend support to this explanation. It may also find support in the fact that the temporary unified forms in which the tribe may, in certain cases, be organized, are mostly sustained by temporary acquired rights on grazing land and water points as will be revealed when we examine the lower levels of dwelling environment. Thus, judging by all this, we may conclude that within the level of geography the Rashaidaa do not have a strong sense of belonging to the same tribe or clan.

6.3.1. THE LEVEL OF THE NOMADIC CAMP: USUALLY THE TERRITORY OF HOUSEHOLDS BELONGING TO THE BRANCH OF THE TRIBE.

The dry season camps of the Rashaidaa which gather around reliable water sources during the period from October to March, constitute their biggest nomadic socio-economic residential units as

they may be composed of up to thirty or forty households.⁽⁵⁰⁾ In these camps, the households gather around a senior man who administers the camp affairs and, in cases of war, leads it against neighbouring camps. Accordingly, the choice of the senior is based on these qualities of leadership.⁽⁵¹⁾ Households of the camp may be closely, or distantly related to the senior. However, as the reputation of the senior man is considered a major criterion for joining a camp, membership of the dry season camps may also include Rashaidaa households who are not related to the senior. Consequently, the membership of camps may change from one season to another.⁽⁵²⁾

Despite this shifting membership of the dry season camps, their general layout and particularly the spatial organization of the closely related, distantly related, and unrelated households of the senior man, remain constant from one season to another. The spatial organization of the camp can be represented by a centre surrounded by three concentric rings. The centre here indicates the household of the senior man; the first ring, the domain of the households of his patriline; the second ring, the domain of the households of his affines; and the third ring, the domain of the households of his distant relatives and those who are not related to him (Fig. 6.11.). The organization of the camp in this manner could be considered a manifestation of the social relations linking the categories of residents living at its various rings or domains.⁽⁵³⁾

The accommodation of the household of the senior man at the centre of the camp is a logical measure, because it is considered

the nucleus of the camp. Moreover, in the same way that a circle has only one centre, the camp has also got only one senior man towards whom support is drawn and converges from all resident households. This consolidates his position. In return, the senior man, through his acquired authority, ensures co-operation between the households of the camp; thus enabling them to secure their livelihood and cope with the meagre resources of the dry season. But, security of livelihood here is not maintained through cultivation and raising animals alone, as it may sometimes also demand resort to the sword and rifle. During such times, the authority of the senior man radiates outwards maintaining order in the camp, and joining together the resources of its households which are made available at his disposal in order to ensure the defence of the camp against any hostile external forces.⁽⁵⁴⁾

The household of the senior man is the centre of the social life of the camp, because within its physical boundaries the disputes within the camp, or between its residents and those living in other camps, are settled. To achieve this, the senior relies on support from all the households of the camp. But, the degree of support varies according to the social relations linking the senior to the various categories living in the camp. It also varies with the physical distance separating the centre of the camp from their domains as described below.⁽⁵⁵⁾,

Besides its impact on the overall layout of the camp, the household of the senior man is also determined by a specific layout which governs spatial relations between its constituent components -

the tents of the co-wives of the senior and their newly married daughters. The tents of the co-wives are all set aside in a straight line⁽⁵⁶⁾ and those of the married daughters are set next to, and so near to, that of their mothers, to the extent that the ropes holding adjacent tents cross one another.

Setting the tents of the co-wives side by side in a straight line, is perceived by the Rashaidda as compliance with an important condition set by the Islamic religion for a polygamous marriage, that is, equality in treating the co-wives.⁽⁵⁷⁾ The proximity of the tents of the co-wives ensures maximum co-operation between their households, which is considered crucial in this environment especially as some of the younger wives may be in their early teens, in keeping with the custom of the tribe. Within this household, the younger wives, who have few resources and no grown-up children, seek advice and help from the elder wives who are more experienced and better resourced because they receive gifts from their sons. Through mutual co-operation between the co-wives, the household of the senior man is strengthened and his position in the camp and among his whole clan is consolidated.⁽⁵⁸⁾

Although the tent of the newly married woman is set next to her mother, she still benefits from the experience and support of the other co-wives of her father with whom she shares the same household. This form of co-operation is crucial during the first year of marital life, pregnancy and the delivery of the first baby which must take place in the neighbourhood of her parents as referred to before in Chapter Three Part 3.2.6.

The household of the senior is closely surrounded by the households of his patriline - his sons and brothers. The ring composed of these households (the first ring in Fig. 6.11.) is the first line of defence of the senior man of the camp, and the men living in it are committed to protect the senior unconditionally. The household of the senior, and those of his patriline, co-operate and live together as one big extended family. They organize cultivation and herding tasks jointly under the management of the senior. The resources of this extended family are also shared. All grown-up members of this household are also considered responsible for the up-bringing and disciplining of its children. The proximity of the tents of the households of this extended family, taken together with the openness of the tent, which permits visual contact and supervision, facilitate high levels of co-operation within such a family.⁽⁵⁹⁾

The households of the patriline of the senior are surrounded by the domain of his affines (the second ring in Fig. 6.11.). The physical distance separating the household of the senior and those of his affines, expresses the social distance separating these two groups. For example, members of each group deal with those of the other in a very careful and calculated way, as any service offered is considered a debt that must be repaid. The nature of the relationship here is different from that linking the senior with his patriline which is characterized by unconditional support and deference.⁽⁶⁰⁾

The accommodation of the households of the distant relatives

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of the senior and those who are not related to him at the peripheries of the camp (the third ring in Fig. 6.11. and 6.12.) indicates their weak social relationship with the senior man. This is also indicated by the exclusion of these groups from certain ceremonies and feasts sponsored by the senior and his household. Such kinds of segregation generate a spirit of envy and competition between the distant relatives of the senior and his close relatives, especially his affines who are accommodated next to the distant relatives.⁽⁶¹⁾

There is more than one means of resolving this spirit of envy and competition. The receiving and entertainment of guests is one. Despite the fact that each household competes to receive the guest of the camp, that which wins the honour invites neighbouring households to share in entertaining its guests. The high regard of the tribe for the virtues of good neighbourliness are also among the means by which friction is curtailed between neighbouring households.⁽⁶²⁾ Moreover, the shared conception of the camp residents, that all people living beyond its boundaries are enemies competing with them for the resources of the region, binds with various groups of the camp together.⁽⁶³⁾ This bond is strengthened by their unconditional commitment towards the defence of the camp, which is partly satisfied through disclosing the goods and possessions kept inside the tent, thus making them accessible for all the community in order to serve this purpose.

6.3.3. THE LEVEL OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY HOUSEHOLD: USUALLY FORMS AN INDEPENDENT RAINY-SEASON CAMP.

In the Rashaidaa nomadic lifestyle, the extended family household usually migrates together. Accordingly, it has to be self-sufficient but if it is not, it may join another one. While it may form a single unit among many others in the dry season camps, it may form an independent small camp during the rainy season when water and pasture are available in abundance. During the rainy season such households disperse throughout the countryside (Plates 6.21. and 6.22.).

The extended family household usually consists of a man, his co-wives, their newly married daughters, his father and mother and any married sons. The tents of the co-wives and those of their daughters, together with that of the household head are all arranged side by side in a straight line. If the number of tents is not very large, i.e. more than five, those of the sons may be pitched at both sides of the tents of the co-wives. If the number is large, the tents of the sons are pitched behind and in front of those of their father. In any case their tents must surround that of their father.⁽⁶⁴⁾ In this way the tents of the household form a cluster in the open land that surrounds it (Plates 6.23. and 6.24.). The extending ropes holding the clustered tents, and the fluid space generated by the openness of those tents (Plate 6.25.) demarks the domain of the extended family which is referred to as the people of so and so in reference to the head of this family.

Clustering of the tents in this manner permits maximum co-operation between members of the elementary families of the household. Through this some members may migrate abroad without any worries about their families who stay behind. His wife will be well looked after, and due to the openness of the tents, can be continuously and closely supervised (Plate 6.26.). His children are not only looked after but also reared, according to the social norms of the tribe, within the household. His herd receives attention together with the herd of the household. With his family well protected and his property secured, the Rashaidaa man feels free to migrate for work inside the country or abroad.⁽⁶⁵⁾ Revenues from his migration will also contribute to the livelihood and security of the whole household.

The openness of the tents, and their clustering together creates a well shaded and ventilated area which encourages social interaction between the women and children of the household during the hot summer days. Yet, the same cluster of tents also shelters the men as they return with the herd of the household and gather with their families in the cold winter nights.

By arranging the tents of his wives in a straight line, the head of the household takes the first step towards treating them in an equal way and thus complies with an important religious demand of Islam. His sons, on the other hand, as they surround his household, also complies with a religious demand which emphasizes protection and care for the parents. Besides the arrangement of the tents, their openness also facilitates the protection of women through

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allowing all members of the household to supervise them; and thus satisfy a very important religious and social value. Islam strongly warns against permitting a man to meet in seclusion a woman who is not his mother or sister.

The enclosed domain of the extended family created by the cluster of its tents provides the appropriate social environment for child rearing. The importance of bringing up the children among their patriline is indicated by the social norm which, against religious instructions, permits a divorced wife to remain with her children in the household of her former husband even though they have no sexual relationship.⁽⁶⁶⁾

The clustering of the tents of the extended family household and their proximity to each other provides the appropriate setting for the celebrations of the household during which its children meet their close relatives, enjoy their time and develop basic skills such as the use of the sword.⁽⁶⁷⁾ The spatial organization of the tents also enables the household to join their resources in order to compete with other households in offering hospitality to guests; and thus helps drive out envy and enhance relations with the neighbours who may be invited to share hospitality. This also enables members of the household to obtain vital information from the guest about the situation of pasture and water in remote areas and work opportunities abroad.⁽⁶⁸⁾

Based on what is said above we may conclude that the spatial organization of extended family household aims to serve economical,

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environmental, religious and socio-cultural objectives in an integrated way. Through the spatial relations of the tents of such a household, the family is able to enhance its economy through migration inside the country and abroad, withstand the hot summer and cold winter seasons, protect its women, bring up its children and offer hospitality to guests.

6.3.5. THE LEVEL OF THE INDIVIDUAL TENT: USUALLY ACCOMMODATING AN ELEMENTARY FAMILY.

The orientation of the Rashaidaa tent, and its relationship with adjacent tents expresses important aspects of the life of the tribe. Employment of the same set of pegs in order to pitch adjacent tents, expresses strong social links, and high levels of co-operation between neighbouring elementary families. On the other hand, the free north and south sides of the tent indicate an intention to have the maximum benefits of natural ventilation desirable during summer time (Fig. 6.13.). These free sides also facilitate interaction between the users of the tents of the patriline set in front of and behind this tent.

The shape, and size of the tent of the Rashaidaa (Figs. 6.13. and 6.14.) considered together with the flexible way in which it is opened and closed, reveals important aspects of the life of the tribe and its elementary families. The large size of the tent (about 6 x 3 sq.m.) demonstrates the high degree of independence of this family, as indicated by the accommodation of its children, guests, goats, firewood and stock of grain, all under one roof (Plates 6.27.

and 6.28.). Within the two large central parts of the tent the woman of the house finds plenty of space to carry on her housework (Plates 6.29. and 6.30.). When her husband leaves the camp to secure the livelihood of his family, the tent of the household is opened widely in order to permit resident patriline to look after her (Plate 6.26.).

The tent is also prepared to receive and keep the possessions accumulating from revenues of the migrating husband. The goats purchased from this revenue are kept in the small left part of the tent and the grain stored in the small right part. (Figs. 6.27. and 6.28.). Although, these possessions are received and kept, they are not concealed and locked, but rather revealed and made accessible to other resident patriline. Through this, these patriline are allowed to assess the needs of the household and assist it, if necessary, without any embarrassment. Moreover, by exposing its possessions the household also make it available for the whole camp during any emergency and thus complies with an important social obligation.

Lifting the front and back sides of the tent, does not only allow resident patriline to take care of the family and property of a migrating tribesman, but also permits maximum ventilation for all households during the hot summer season, when the temperature may reach up to 42°C. Good ventilation is very crucial for this tribe, because all the life of the family is focused inside the tent, or in the spaces immediately in front of or behind it, rather than in public open spaces. Thus, by lifting up and cantilevering the front

and back sides of the tent over these spaces, the tent and its extending ropes demark and embrace the domain of the elementary family⁽⁶⁹⁾ (Plates 6.23., 6.24., and 6.25).

Good ventilation of the tent is also very necessary for the women because their tribal dress, which they do not take off even inside their tents, covers them from top to toe⁽⁷⁰⁾ (Plates 6.3. and 6.4.). Good ventilation of the tent is also important during the rainy season in order to speed up the drying of the tent cloth which is made of woven wool. But the tent can also be closed in winter time to protect the household from the cold weather when temperatures drop to about 16°C.

By opening the tent and cantilevering its front side, the guests who were sent by God, rest in the shade during the hot summer days (Plate 6.31.), and through this the host household experiences a feeling of satisfaction. But, due to the high place of the guest among the tribespeople, the tent is also designed to accommodate him when the weather becomes cold. For this purpose the tent is divided by a blanket hung from the middle supporting poles (Plate 6.32.) and thus a guest quarter is created and separated from that of the family. Through this, the women serve and entertain the guest without sacrificing their privacy.

The front and back side of the tent may be closed even if the weather is hot. This is usually done to permit women to remove their face mask and part of their veil in order to perform certain tasks which require this, such as the weaving of the tent cloth. This

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measure ensures that the woman can perform such tasks and yet comply with a highly regarded social norm which prohibits her from revealing her mouth and certain parts of her face to any man who is not her husband or one of her consanguines.⁽⁷²⁾

The spaciousness of the tent enables the parents to be close to their sons and daughters even at bedtime. Yet, this proximity does not isolate the children from their kinsfolk. Through the entertainment of guests inside the tent (Plate 6.33.), they are able to develop social links with their tribespeople. As the children grow up and through marriage leave the tent to build their own household, they still remain close to their parents. The married men pitch their tents close by and around that of their father. By so doing they protect their father and receive his advice. On the other hand, the tents of the newly married daughters are set up next to that of their mothers. This proximity allows the mother to train and supervise her daughter during the initial period of marital life. This is very important, because, in keeping with the custom of the tribe, the daughter may be just fourteen or fifteen years old.

6.3.6. THE LEVEL OF THE THING: THE PIECES OF FURNITURE AND DOMESTIC APPLIANCES AROUND WHICH THE SOCIAL LIFE OF THE ELEMENTARY FAMILY REVOLVES.

The tent is divided into four sections, two big and two small (Fig. 6.13.). Accommodation of all members of the family, their small animals, firewood and stock of grain together inside the tent indicates the high level of independence of the nucleus family

household and its control over its possessions. Yet, the storage of these possessions in this manner shows the intention of their owners to display and make them accessible to neighbouring households.

The arrangement of the four main parts of the tent along an east-west axis (Fig. 6.13.), shows a concern to gain the maximum benefits from natural ventilation and shading of the central living area of the tent. But this arrangement, considered together with the openness of the tent, also reveals an intention to permit the community of the camp to monitor the family life inside the tent.

The location of the straw mat and hearth on which the women sit and cook, near the entrance of the tent, and next to the bed and in which the men sit and guests are received, expresses the leading role played by the women in the life of the household.

We can see that the shape, size and openings of the tent, considered together with the manner in which the furniture and other domestic appliances interact inside it, are a clear response to important demands of the social and cultural life of the tribe. They reveal also the high degree of freedom and independence enjoyed by the elementary family living in the tent with regards to aspects such as the rearing of children and reception of guests. Yet, these spatial relations also show the high levels of co-operation between this family, and closely related ones living near by, with respect to the same cultural demands and social obligations.

6.4. A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO DWELLING SPACE: CONCLUSIONS.

In their contiguous lives in the eastern region of the country, the Hadendowa and Rashaidda share together the natural resources and economic potential. Their lifestyles and economic systems are also similar; as both are nomadic pastoralists who rely on small scale seasonal cultivation. In terms of climate, both tribes are exposed to the hot summer season, the chilly winter nights, the occasional heavy downpours which occur during the short rainy season and the dust storms that precede them. As to building materials, those naturally available for constructing the mobile dwellings of the two nomadic tribes, are also similar. Concerning the tent components and domestic appliances required by the household, both tribes are similarly constrained by the mobile nature of their lifestyle which limits the weight of what they can carry as they move from one place to the other.

Despite all these common factors, our examination of the settlement using environments of the two tribes reveals remarkable variations in their organization and use of dwelling space. This is no doubt attributable to their different social and cultural characteristics which provide the main variable between the two tribes. Examples occur in the differences between them in the strategy and norms regarding child rearing, protection of women and hospitality to guests. All these have their remarkable response on the organization of space. The differences in these strategies and norms reflect also on their socio-economic systems, as well as the manner through which they cope with the unfavourable effects of the climate.

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The two tribes adopt different strategies in order to secure a livelihood and support their economy. While the Hadendowa pursue these aims as large integrated residential units, the Rashaidaa mainly accomplishes it as individual units - of extended families - which live side by side and co-operate with each other in a specific way. The difference in strategies reflects strongly on the spatial organization of the camp, as well as on the social relations which link the households camping there.

The two tribes also differ in the ways in which they cope with the unfavourable effects of the climate. For example, segregation between the men and women at different domains in the Hadendowa camp enables the women to perform their housework and undertake economic activities out of doors during the hot summer days without diminishing their privacy. This arrangement is facilitated by setting the camp inside a forest or shaded area. Accommodation of the men in light shelters and canopies, rather than the closed tent, also enables the men to cope with unfavourable effects of the weather. On the other hand, the flexible tent of the Rashaidaa permits them to cope with the hot summer season, as it could be widely opened, and thus ensures high levels of natural ventilation. This arrangement is considered acceptable according to the social norms regarding the protection of women, because the privacy of the Rashaidaa women is maintained through their tribal costume - the veil. Maximum ventilation of the tent is ensured also through the open sites in which the tribespeople set up their camps.

Initiation of the boys and girls at various stages of their

growth and development, and its significant impact on spatial organization, is also among the main factors leading to the remarkable variations in the dwelling space of the two tribes. During this process, the boys and girls of the Hadendowa, move from one distant domain to another, and from one detached tent to another. Through this, the spatial organization and social relations in the whole camp are affected. On the other hand, initiation of the Rashaidaa boys and girls mostly takes place inside the tent of their elementary family which has to be large enough to cater for this process. Movement of the boys and girls from this tent at a later stage of their growth usually happens within the boundaries of the extended family household which partially contributes in the initiation process. This contribution is facilitated by the proximity of the tents of the extended family, as well as the openness of each tent.

The satisfaction of requirements regarding the protection of women is also among the main factors behind the remarkable variation between the dwelling space of the Hadendowa and that of the Rashaidaa. To satisfy these requirements, the Hadendowa accommodate the unmarried men and women of the camp at separate domains, and secure private life inside the tent through careful screening. Following a different strategy, the Rashaidaa accomplishes this through accommodating each of the extended families of the camp in a detached residential unit consisting of closely spaced and fairly open tents.

The requirements regarding hospitality and entertainment of

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guests also contribute to the variations in the use of dwelling space. The satisfaction of these requirements, which is accomplished in a co-operative way in the Hadendowa camps, leads to the creation of communal guest places detached from the households in order to ensure the protection and privacy of women. For the Rashaidaa, hospitality to guests is associated with individual households. The openness of the tent stands as a welcoming sign for the guest and permits the household head - male or female - to monitor his arrival in the camp and thus compete with the other households in receiving him inside the tent. The fact that his reception takes place there partially explains the large size of the tent interiors which is divided during his visit in order to provide him with a separate quarter.

Our examination of these two tribes reveal that their employment of space in order to secure a livelihood and support the economy, and cope with the unfavourable effects of the climate, is not achieved at the expense of the requirements of their religious and social life. On the contrary, the examination reveals that the same spatial organization employed for the satisfaction of these objectives also ensures that all age and sex groups of the society are initiated in such a way that they can ^{perform} form the social roles assigned for them. The spatial organization is aimed also to ensure that requirements associated with important values such as the protection of women or hospitality to the guests are well catered for. Thus, the findings of the examination and comparison between the two tribes supports a hypothesis emphasizing that for space to be a real dimension of human existence, it has to serve economic,

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environmental, social, cultural and religious objectives all together in an integrated and simple manner.

Confirming the validity of the hypothesis through examining nomadic people does not necessarily indicate its suitability as a base for formulating official policies which are directed mainly to housing settled communities. Moreover, the link between socio-cultural characteristics and organization of dwelling space established in this chapter may not be as strong as it appears. With regard to settled urban lifestyle, where traditional groups live as part of an overall culturally heterogeneous urban community in an officially planned and designed housing environment, socio-cultural characteristics possibly may not have a strong impact in the organization and use of space. Thus, to re-examine and confirm the value of the phenomenological approach and the concept of existential space for understanding the nature of the dwelling environment we have to investigate traditional societies in their settled urban lifestyles. This task is dealt with in the next chapter which examines the same two tribes - the Beja and Rashaidaa - as they live in officially planned and designed housing areas in Kassala - the capital of the eastern region of the Sudan.

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3. For information about the economy of the Hadendowa refer to SALIH, op. cit., pp.49-122. For information about the economy of the Rashaidaa refer to DIRWISH, op. cit., pp.44-48, and p.86. In this respect refer also to YOUNG, W.C., "The Effect of Labour Migration on Relations of Exchange and Subordination among the Rashayda Bedouins of the Sudan" in 'Research in Economic Anthropology'. Vol. 9, 1987, pp.191-200.
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11. DIRWISH, op. cit., pp.74-75 and pp.78-84. Refer also to YOUNG, W.C., "Heterodoxy and Reform among the Rashayda Bedouins" in 'Nomadic Peoples'. International Union of Anthropological and

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12. SALIH, op. cit., p.100.
13. Ibid., p.167.
14. Ibid., pp.95-96.
15. This is based on the observation of the author.
16. YOUNG, W.C., "Veiling as an Organizer of Residence: Structure and Space in a Rashiidy Camp". Presented at the panel: Marriage, the Veil, and the Gender in the Muslim World at the 80th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Los Angeles. December 1981, p.6.
17. YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence among the Rashayda ...", op. cit., p.2. Refer also to DIRWISH, op. cit., p.31.
18. The knowledge of most of the Hadendowa about Arabic language and the Islamic religion is negligible. As a result, the nomadic tribespeople entrust informal teachers with the responsibility of teaching their children the basics of this language and religion. On the contrary, among the nomadic Rashaidaa, this responsibility is undertaken by the fathers of the children. This may be explained by the fact that the tribespeople are Arabic speaking, and that though their knowledge about Islam is not considered very satisfactory, it is much better than that of the Hadendowa.
19. For a detailed description of the tribal costume of the women of the two tribes refer to GREILDA EL-TAYEB, D., "An Illustrated Record of Sudanese National Costumes", Institute of Afro-Asian Studies, University of Khartoum, M.A. Dissertation, 1976, pp.79-112 (Rashaidaa) and pp.138-167 (Hadendowa).

20. For detailed information about the history and ethnic origin of the Beja tribes refer to PAUL, A., "A History of the Beja tribes of the Sudan". Cambridge University Press, 1954. In this respect, refer also to SALIH, op. cit. pp.1-48.
21. This information is based on the personal observation of the author during the field studies undertaken as part of the preparation for the thesis, as well as other travels in the territories of the Beja tribes.
22. BARBOUR, op. cit., pp.80-85.
23. PAUL, op. cit., pp.27-37.
24. Ibid., p.4.
25. Ibid., pp.5-6.
26. SALIH, op. cit., p.26.
27. Ibid., pp.54-55.
28. PAUL, op. cit., p.2 and p.132.
29. SALIH, op. cit., pp.50-53.
30. The Hadendowa camp investigated by Salih as part of preparation for his thesis referred to above shows how the tribespeople integrated the element of natural landscape with their settlements.
31. PAUL, op. cit. pp.9-10.
32. PAUL, op. cit., pp.4-5. Refer also to OHAJ, M.A., "The Cultural Heritage of the Beja Tribes", in Arabic, Sudan Research Unit, University of Khartoum, 1971, p.55 and pp.91-92.
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34. OHAJ, op. cit., p.87, and SALIH, op. cit., p.69.
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36. Ibid., p.65.
37. The Hadendowa woman's tribal costume is formed of a single length of a light type of cloth which is loosely wrapped around the whole body and over the head. The women usually do not wear any underwear underneath this Sari-like dress.
38. SALIH, op. cit., p.69.
39. Ibid., p.88.
40. Ibid., pp.88-102.
41. Ibid., p.66.
42. Ibid., pp.88-102.
43. Ibid., pp.88-102.
44. Ibid., p.65.
45. Ibid., p.65.
46. DIRWISH, op. cit., pp.81-84.
47. Ibid., op. cit., pp.74-75.
48. Ibid., p.132.
49. Ibid., pp.76-78.
50. YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence Among ...", op. cit., p.1.
51. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.31.
52. YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence ...", op. cit., p.2.
53. YOUNG, "Heterodoxy and Reform among the Rashayda ...", op. cit., p.36.
54. Ibid., p.36.
55. Ibid., p.36.
56. YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence ...", op. cit., p.2.
57. Ibid., p.2.
58. YOUNG, "Heterodoxy and Reform ...", op. cit., p.36.
59. Ibid., p.36.
60. Ibid., p.36.

61. Ibid., p.36.
62. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.30, p.35, and p.43.
63. YOUNG, "Heterodoxy and Reform ...", op. cit., p.36.
64. YOUNG, "Veil as an Organizer ...", op. cit., p.2.
65. YOUNG, "The Effect of Labour Migration ...", op. cit., p.195.
66. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.51.
67. Ibid., p.44.
68. Ibid., p.119.
69. YOUNG, "Veiling as an Organizaer ...", op. cit., p.3.
70. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.51.
71. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.41. Refer also to AL HASSAN, op. cit., p.66.
72. YOUNG, "Veiling as an Organizer ...", op. cit., p.4.

FIGURES:

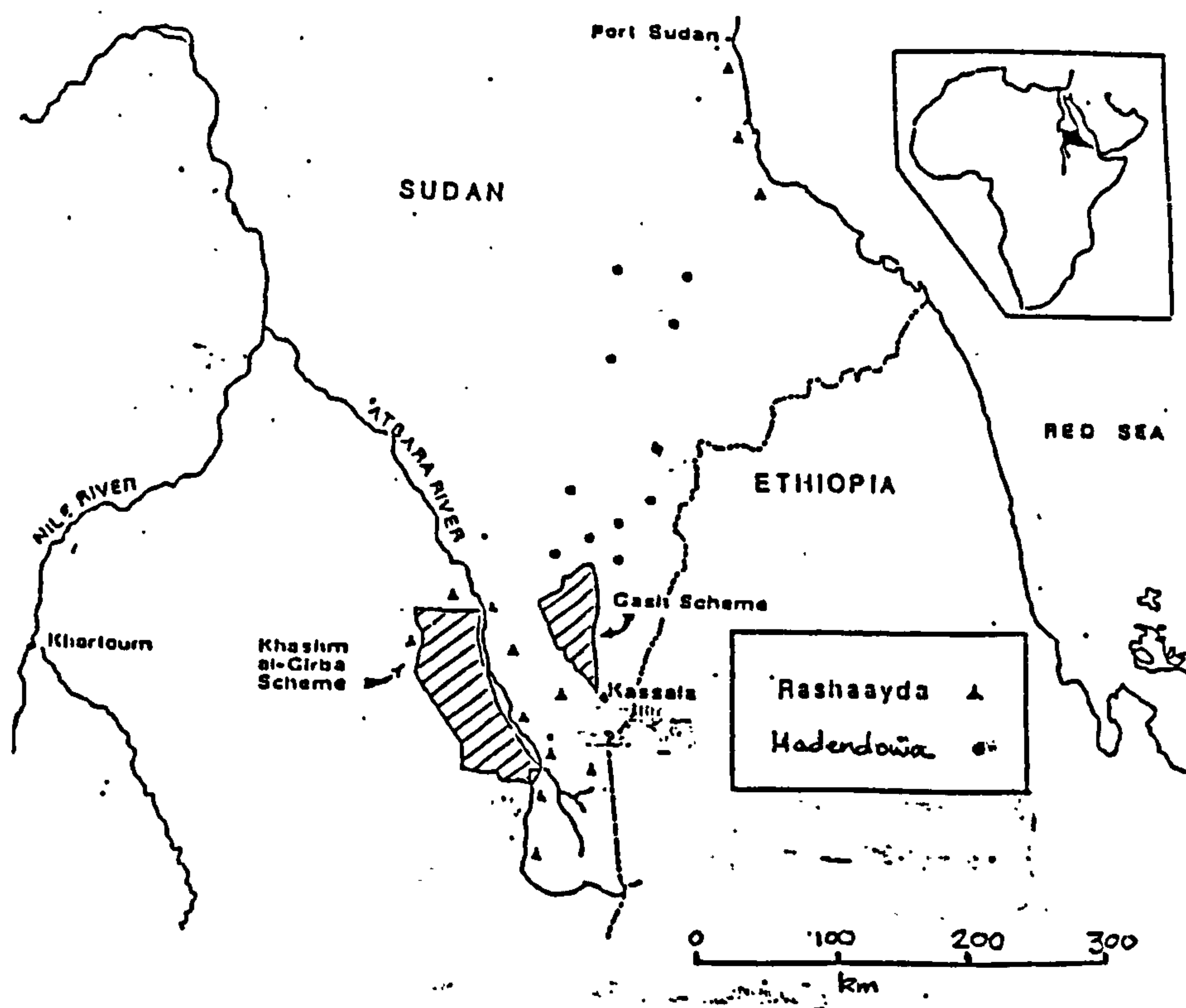


Fig. 6.1. THE TERRITORIES OF THE HADENDOWA AND RASHAIDAA TRIBES IN THE EASTERN REGION OF THE COUNTRY.

(Source: YOUNG, W.C., "The Effect of Labour Migration on Relations of Exchange and Subordination among the Rashaidda Bedouins".)

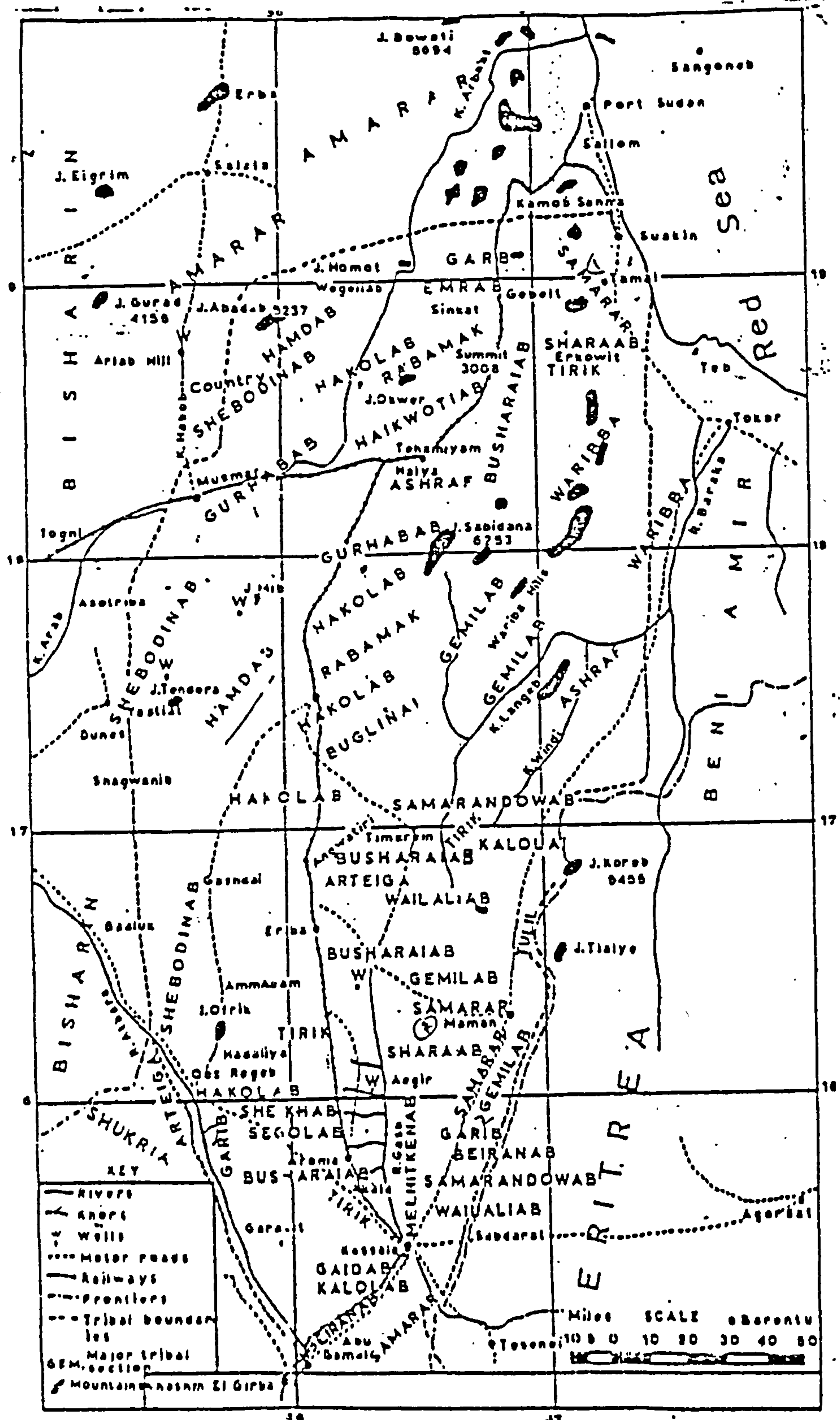


Fig. 6.2. THE AREAS ALLOCATION FOR THE VARIOUS HADENDOWA CLANS WITHIN THE OVERALL TERRITORY OF THE TRIBE IN THE EASTERN REGION.

(Source: SALIH, H.M., "Some Aspects of Hadendowa Social Organization", M.Sc. Thesis. University of Khartoum, 1971.)

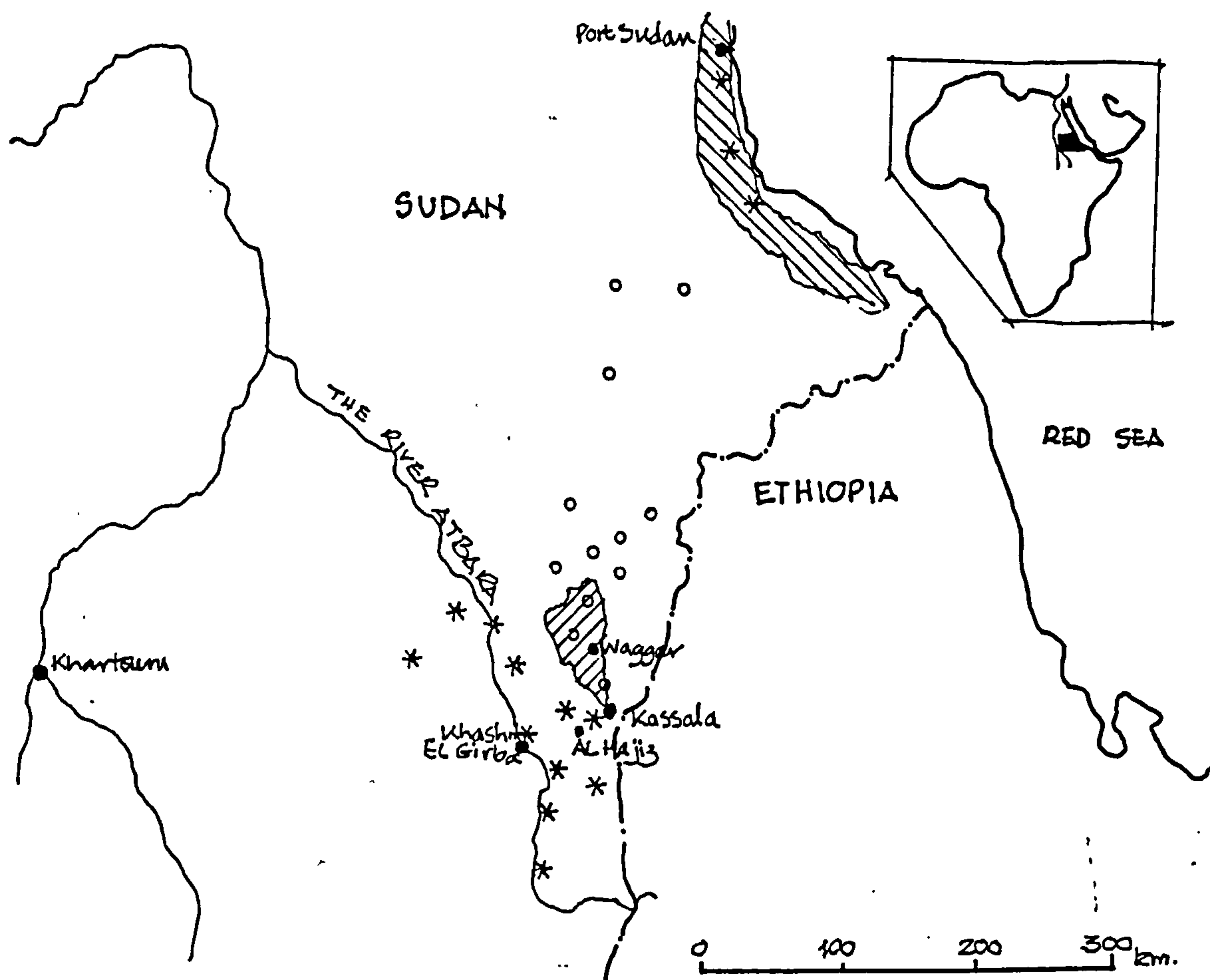


Fig. 6.3. THE TOWNS AROUND WHICH THE FIELD STUDIES WERE CONDUCTED.

KEY:

The Red Sea Hills area.

The Gash Delta.

The Hadendowa territories.

The Rashaada territories.

(Source: YOUNG, W.C., "The Effect of Labour Migration on Relations of Exchange and Subordination Among the Rashaayda Bedouins of Sudan" in 'Research in Economic Anthropology'. Vol. 9, 1987, p:191.)

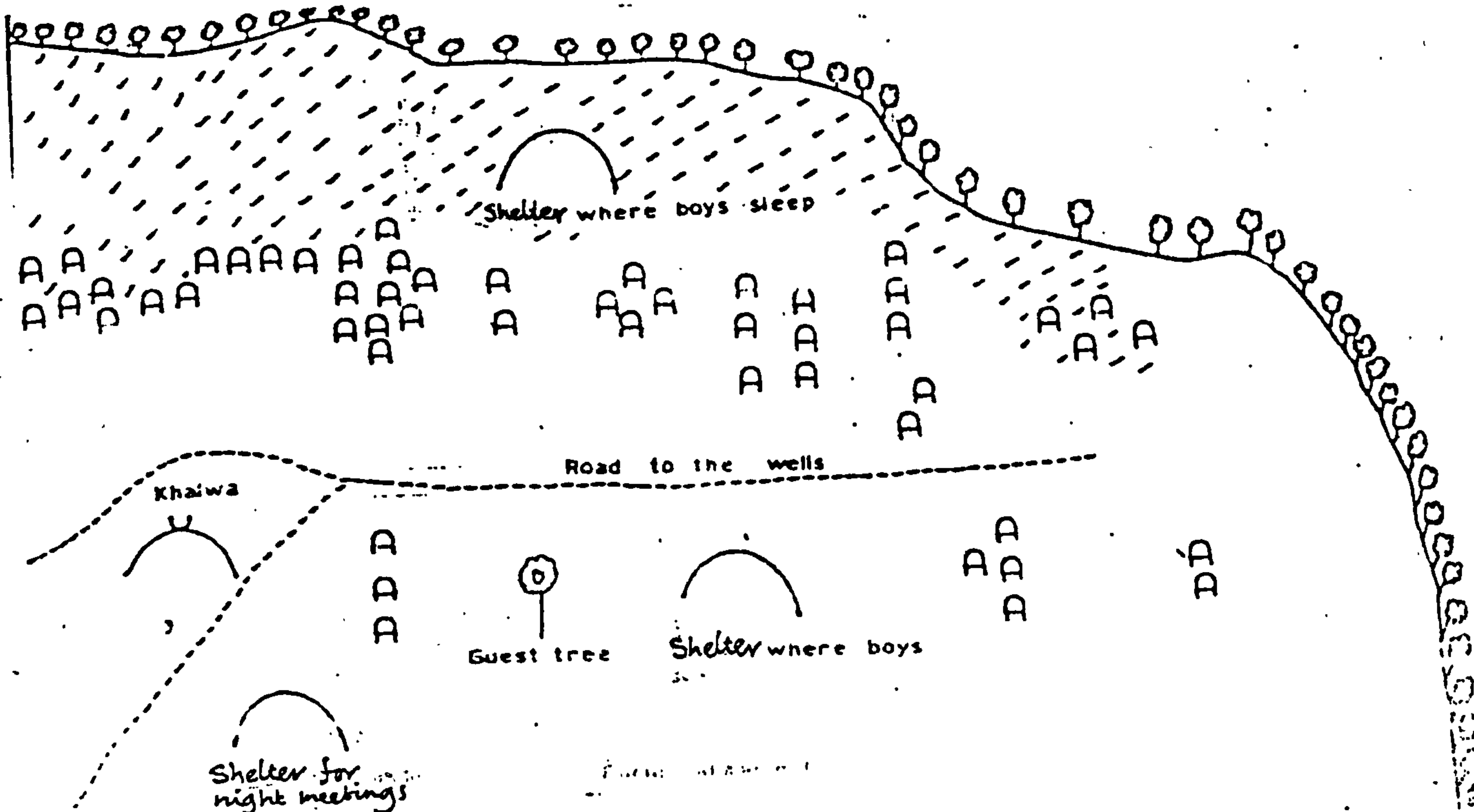





Fig. 6.4. THE A'AMRAI FARIG - THE HADENDOWA NOMADIC CAMP WHICH WAS INVESTIGATED BY SALIH. (Not to scale).

KEY:

-  Tents where elementary families live.
-  Shrubs.
-  Woods boundary.

(Source: SALIH, H.M., "Some Aspects of Hadendowa Social Organization". M.Sc. Thesis. University of Khartoum, 1971.)

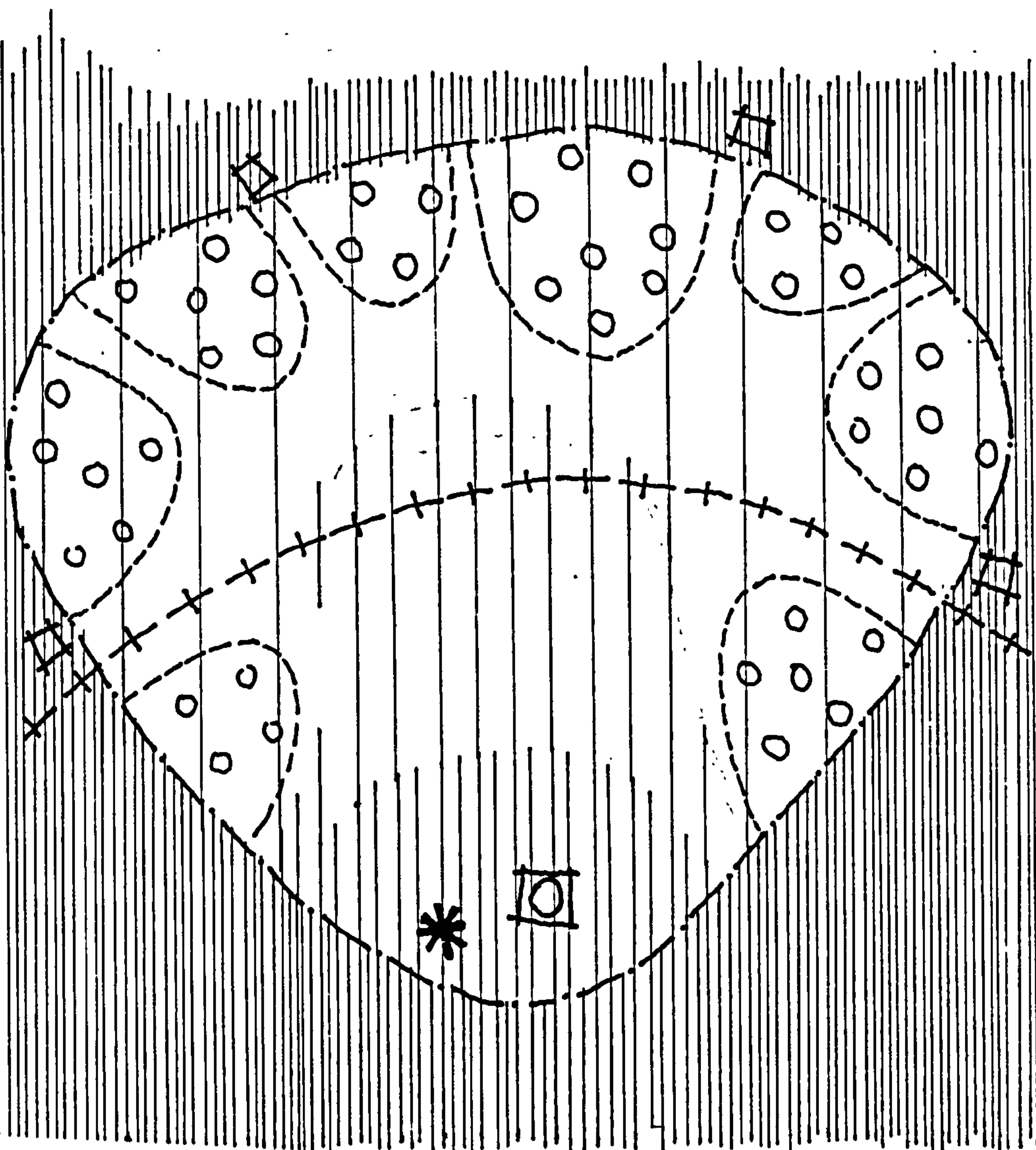


Fig. 6.5. THE COMPOSITION AND SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE HADENDOWA CAMP. THE FIGURE SHOWS ALSO THE GRADIENT OF PRIVACY AT VARIOUS ZONES OF THE CAMP. (Not to scale).

KEY:

- The boundary of the camp.
- The tents of the elementary families.
- The boundary of the extended family household.
- +++ The way to the wells.
- ⊞ The young and unmarried men's shelter.
- ⊞ The Quranic school.
- * The guest tree.
- |||| Public space.
- |||| Semi-public space.
- \\ ||| Semi-private space.
- | | | Private space.

(Source: The author).

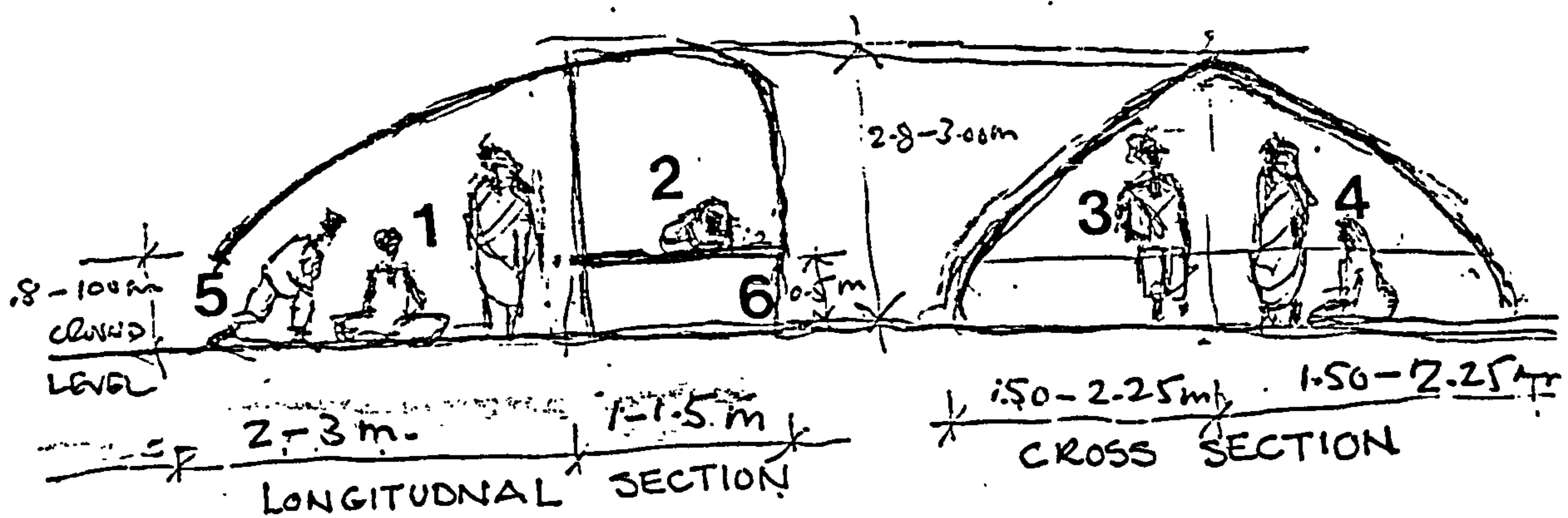


Fig. 6.6. LONGITUDINAL AND CROSS SECTIONS IN THE HADENDOWA TENT SHOWING THE USE OF INTERNAL SPACE AND AVAILABLE HEADROOM. (Not to scale).

KEY:

- 1- Daytime activities.
- 2- Sleeping part.
- 3- Right hand side of the tent.
- 4- Left hand side.
- 5- Entrance.
- 6- Openings underneath the tent walls.

(Source: The author)

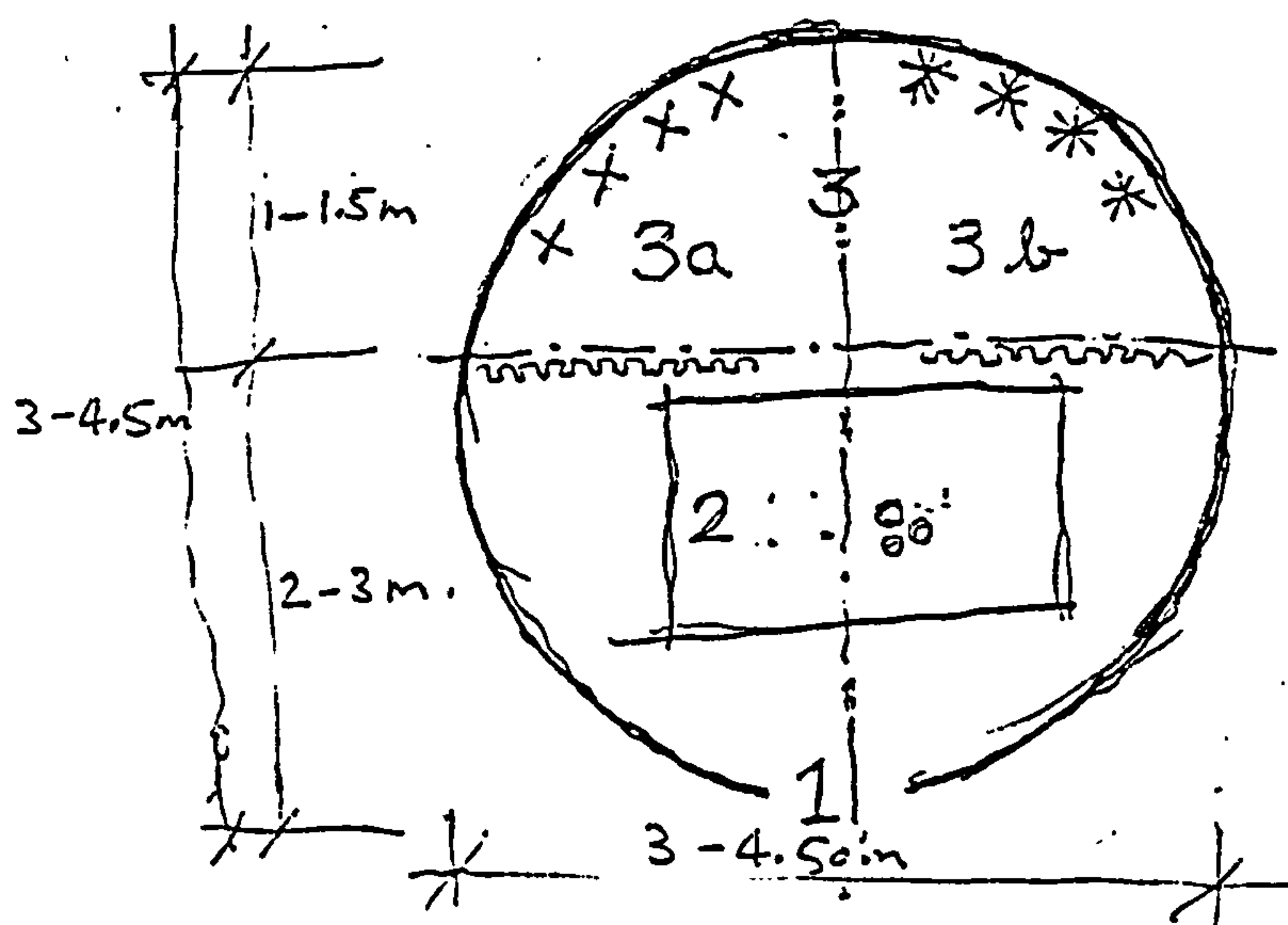


Fig. 6.7. PLAN SHOWING THE LAYOUT OF THE FURNITURE AND BASIC DOMESTIC APPLIANCES INSIDE THE HADENDOWA TENT.
(Not to scale).

KEY:

- 1- Tent entrance.
- 2- The floor mat where the women do their housework.
- 3- The bed side of the tent.
- 3a- The bed side of the husband.
- 3b- The bed side of the wife.

(Source: The author)

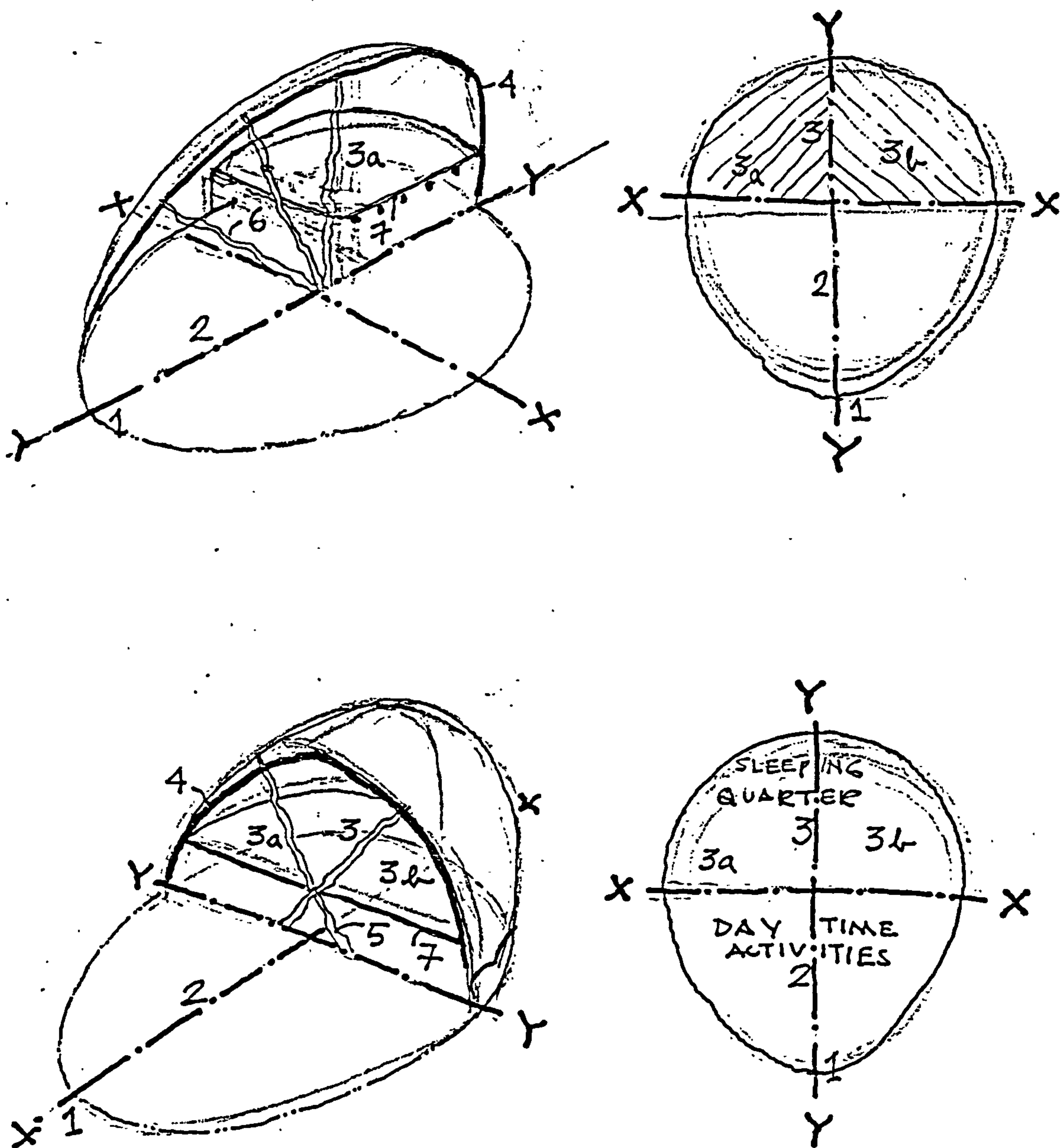


Fig. 6.8. PLANS AND ISOMETRIC DRAWINGS SHOWING THE MAIN AXIS OF THE HADENDOWA TENT AND THE SYSTEM OF ITS DIVISION INTO TWO PARTS FOR DAYTIME ACTIVITIES AND SLEEPING. (Not to scale).

KEY:

- 1- The tent entrance.
- 2- The area where women do their housework.
- 3- The sleeping area where the raised bed is located.
- 3a- The husband's side of the bed.
- 3b- The wife's side of the bed.
- 4- The tent wall or membrane.
- 5- The vertical supports running across the tent.
- 6- The vertical supports running along the tent.
- 7- The line of the tent main axis.
- 8- The boundary line of the tent.

(Source: The author)

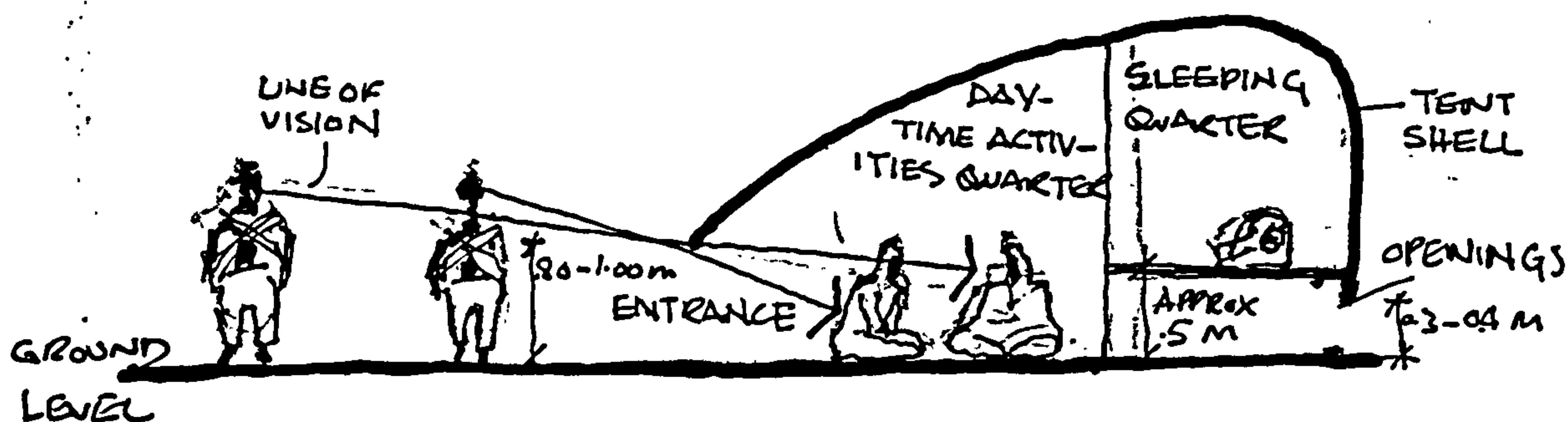
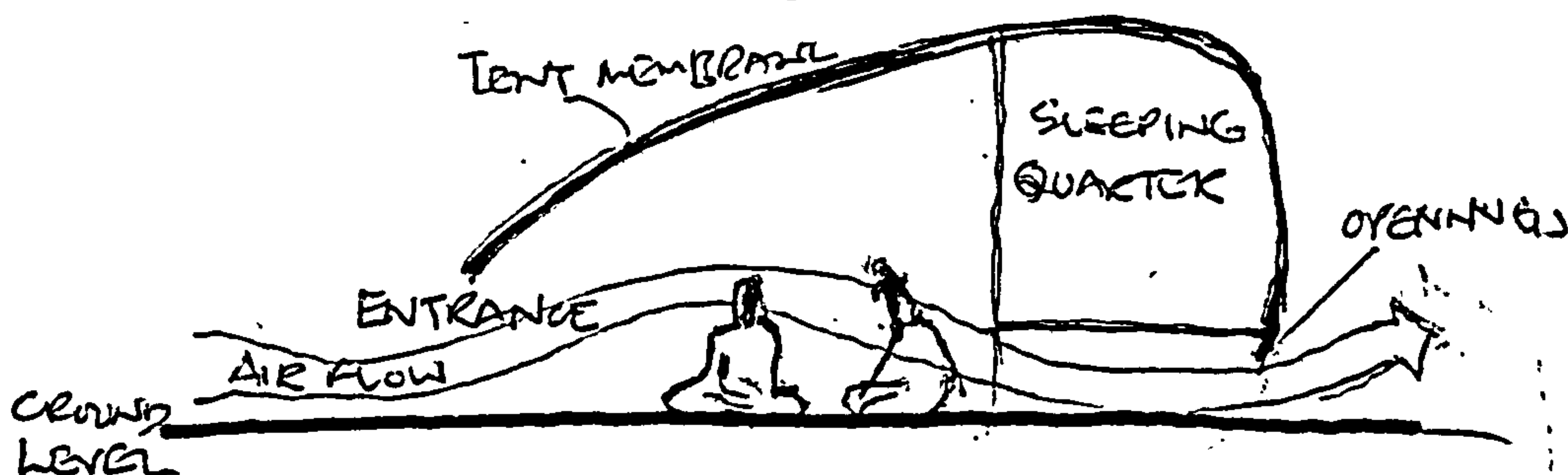
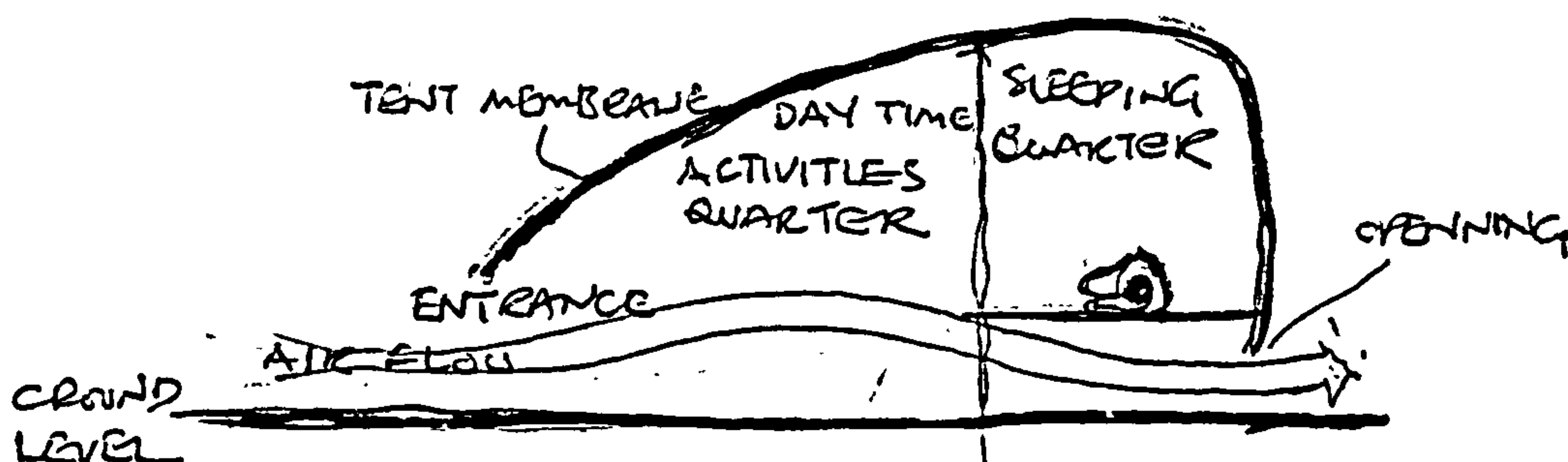


Fig. 6.9. A LONGITUDINAL SECTION IN THE HADENDOWA TENT SHOWING HOW A HIGH LEVEL OF PRIVACY IS MAINTAINED IN THE SLEEPING QUARTER. (Not to scale).

(Source: The author)



USE OF THE TENT DURING DAY TIME



USE OF THE TENT DURING NIGHT TIME

Fig. 6.10. A LONGITUDINAL SECTION IN THE HADENDOWA TENT SHOWING HOW A REASONABLE LEVEL OF VENTILATION IS MAINTAINED DURING DAY AND NIGHT. (Not to scale).

(Source: The author)

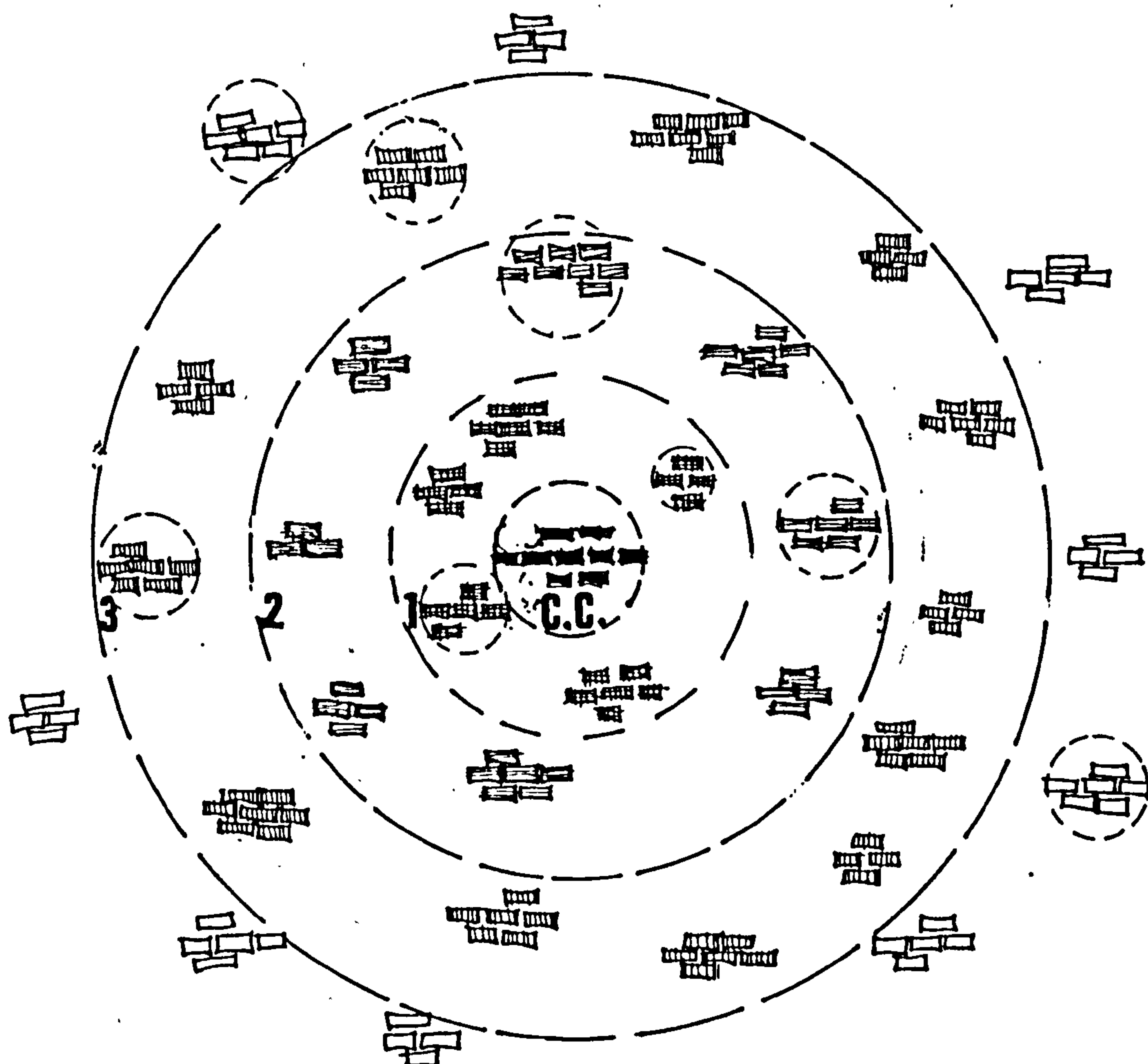


Fig. 6.11. THE SPATIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE RASHAIDAA DRY SEASON CAMP. (Not to scale).

KEY:

C.C. The camp centre.

Boundaries of extended family households.

1- The first ring.


2- The second ring.

3- The third ring.

 The tents of the senior man household.

 The tents of the patrilineal households of the senior.

 The tents of the affines of the senior.

 The tents of the distant relatives of the senior and camp members who are not related to him.

 The tents of non-camp members.

(Source: Modified from YOUNG, W.C., "Heterodoxy and Reform Among the Rashayda Bedouins" in 'Nomadic People'. Inter-national Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences. No. 15, April 1984, pp.14-35).

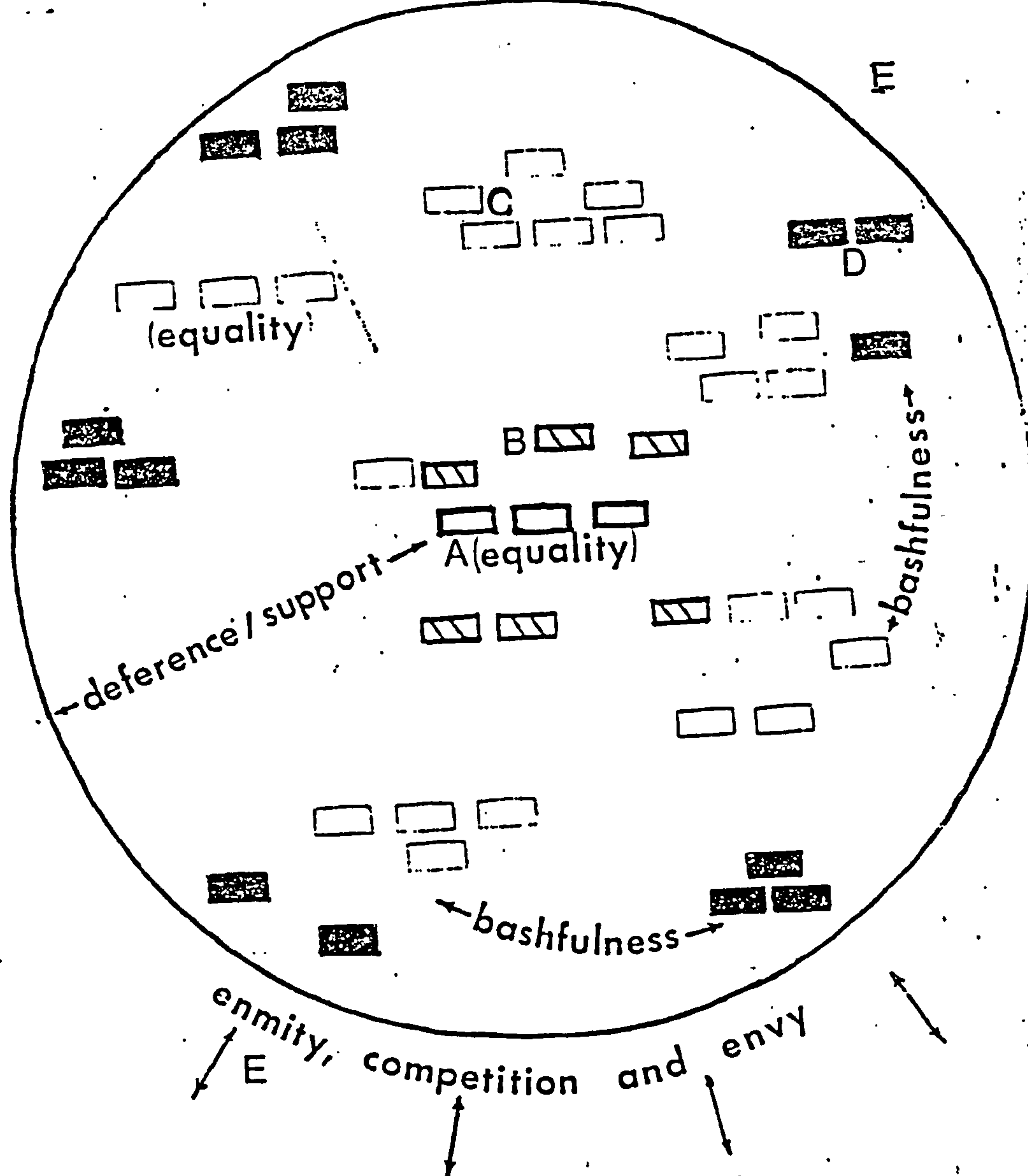


Fig. 6.12. SHOWING THE NATURE OF THE SOCIAL RELATIONS LINKING THE VARIOUS CATEGORIES OF RESIDENTS IN THE RASHAIDAA DRY SEASON CAMP. (Not to scale).

KEY:

- A- The domain of household of the senior man.
- B- The domain of the patriline of the senior.
- C- The domain of the affines of the senior.
- D- The domain of the distant and non-relatives of the senior.
- E- The domains of non-camp people.
- Unconditional support.
- Calculated relationship based on reciprocity.
- Envy.
- Enmity and competition.

(Source: YOUNG, W.C., "Heterodoxy and Reform Among the Rashaidaa Bedouins", op. cit.)



Fig. 6.13. THE SPATIAL ORGANIZATION INSIDE THE RASHAIDAA TENT.
(Not to scale).

KEY:

- 1- The floor mat and location of the stove (the area where the woman of the house does her housework).
- 2- The bed on which the couple and their children sleep.
- 3- The area where small animals are tethered and firewood is kept.
- 4- The area where baggage and food rations are kept.

(Source: The author)

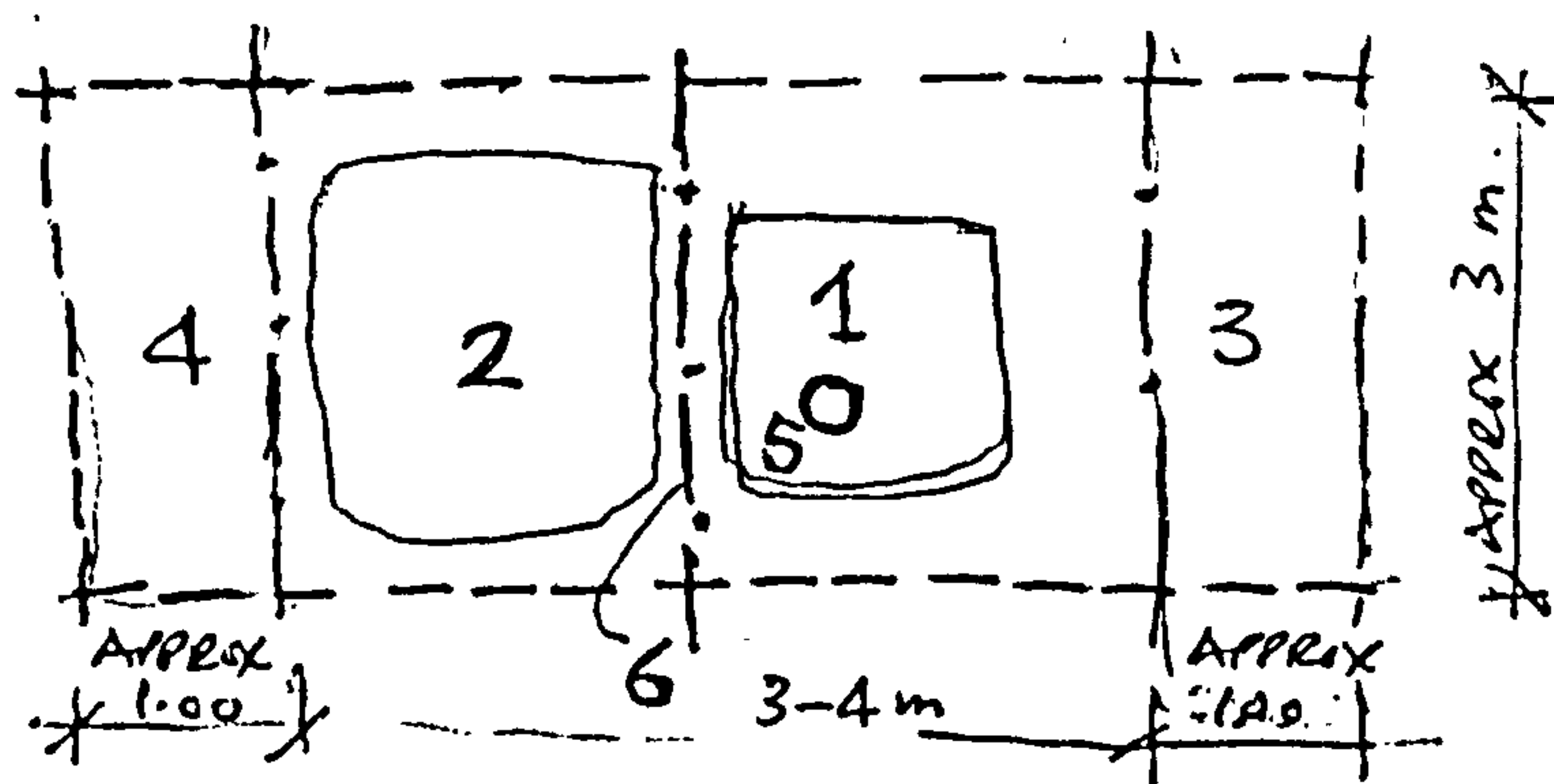


Fig. 6.14. A PLAN SHOWING THE SPATIAL ORGANIZATION INSIDE THE RASHAIDAA TENT. (Not to scale).

KEY:

- 1- The floor mat where the women cook and do their housework.
- 2- The bed where the couple sleep with their children.
- 3- The area where small animals and firewood are kept.
- 4- The area where baggage and food rations are stored.
- 5- The location of the stove.
- 6- The line of the dividing curtain which separates the guest quarter.
- 7- The line of the tent roof.
- 8- The line of the tent vertical supports.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.1. Hadendowa women wearing the tribal costume.

(Source: "Akhir Saa" weekly magazine. Akhbar Alyom Publishing House, Cairi)

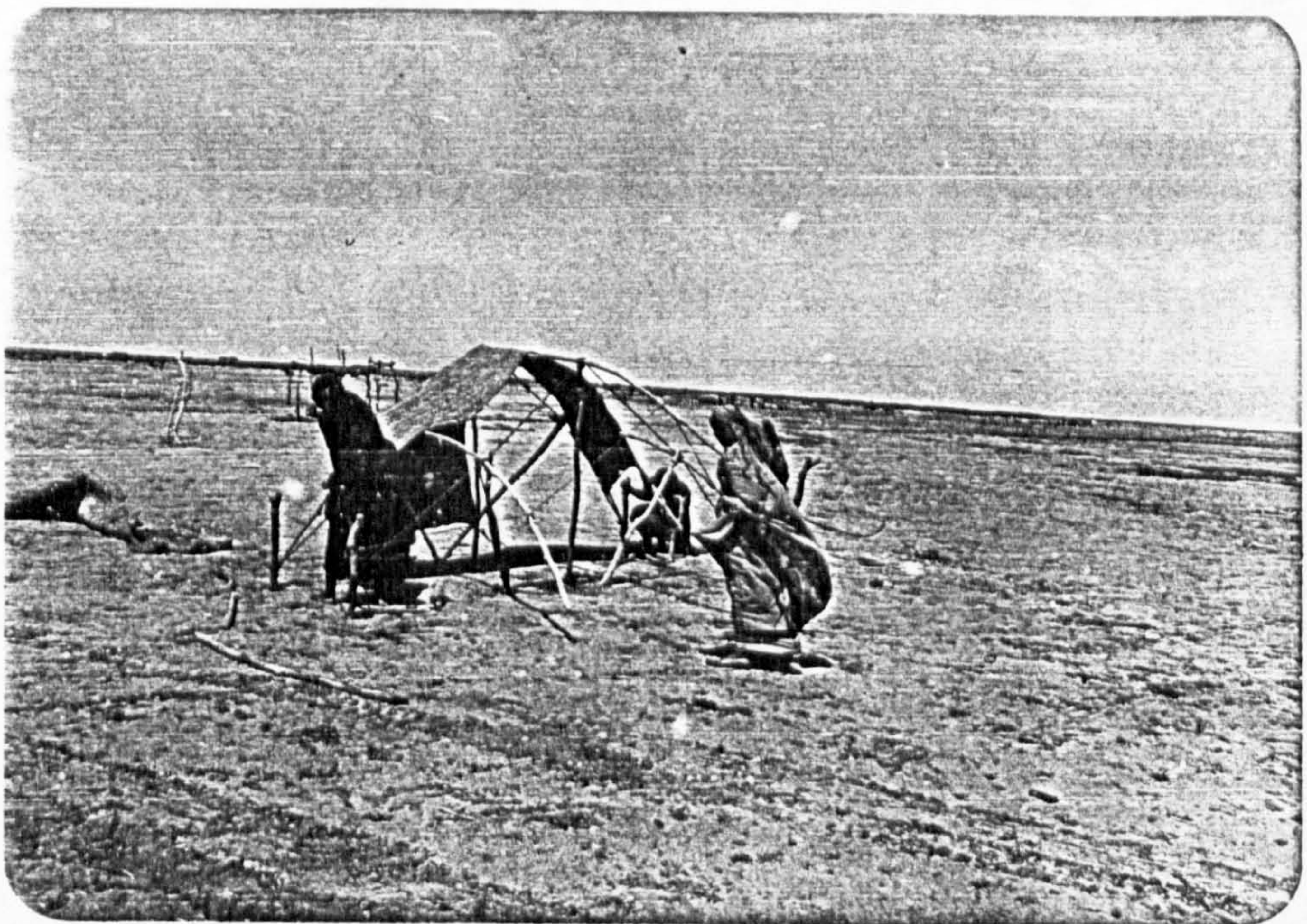


Plate 6.2. Hadendowa women wearing the tribal costume.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.3. A Rashaidaa woman wearing the tribal costume.

(Source: The Department of Colour Photography, Ministry of Information, Republic of Sudan)



Plate 6.4. Rashaidaa men and women wearing their tribal costume.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.5. The Hadendowa tent.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.6. The Rashaidaa tent.

(Source: The author)

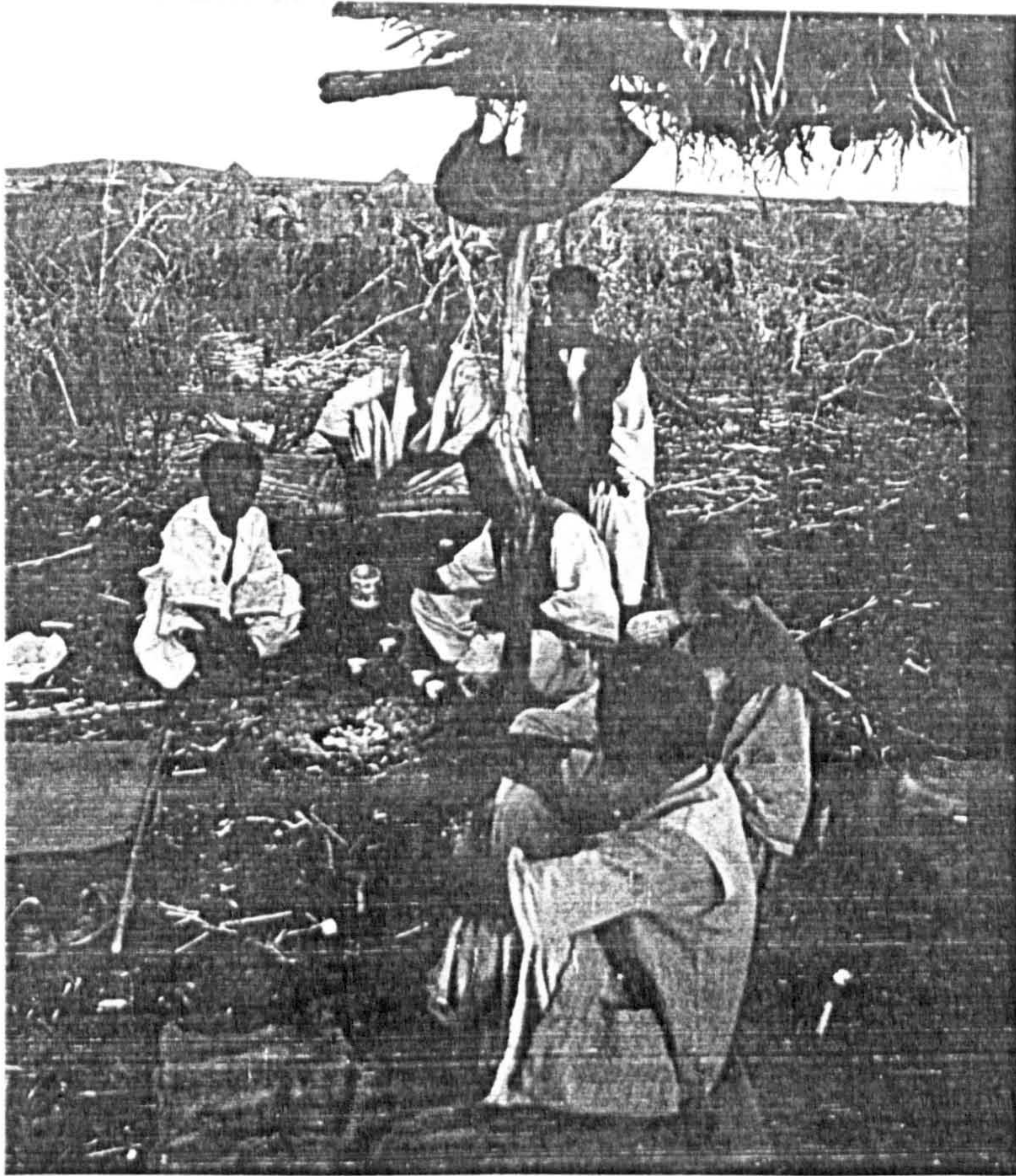


Plate 6.7. Hadendowa young and unmarried men at their nomadic camp shelter.

(Source: The author)

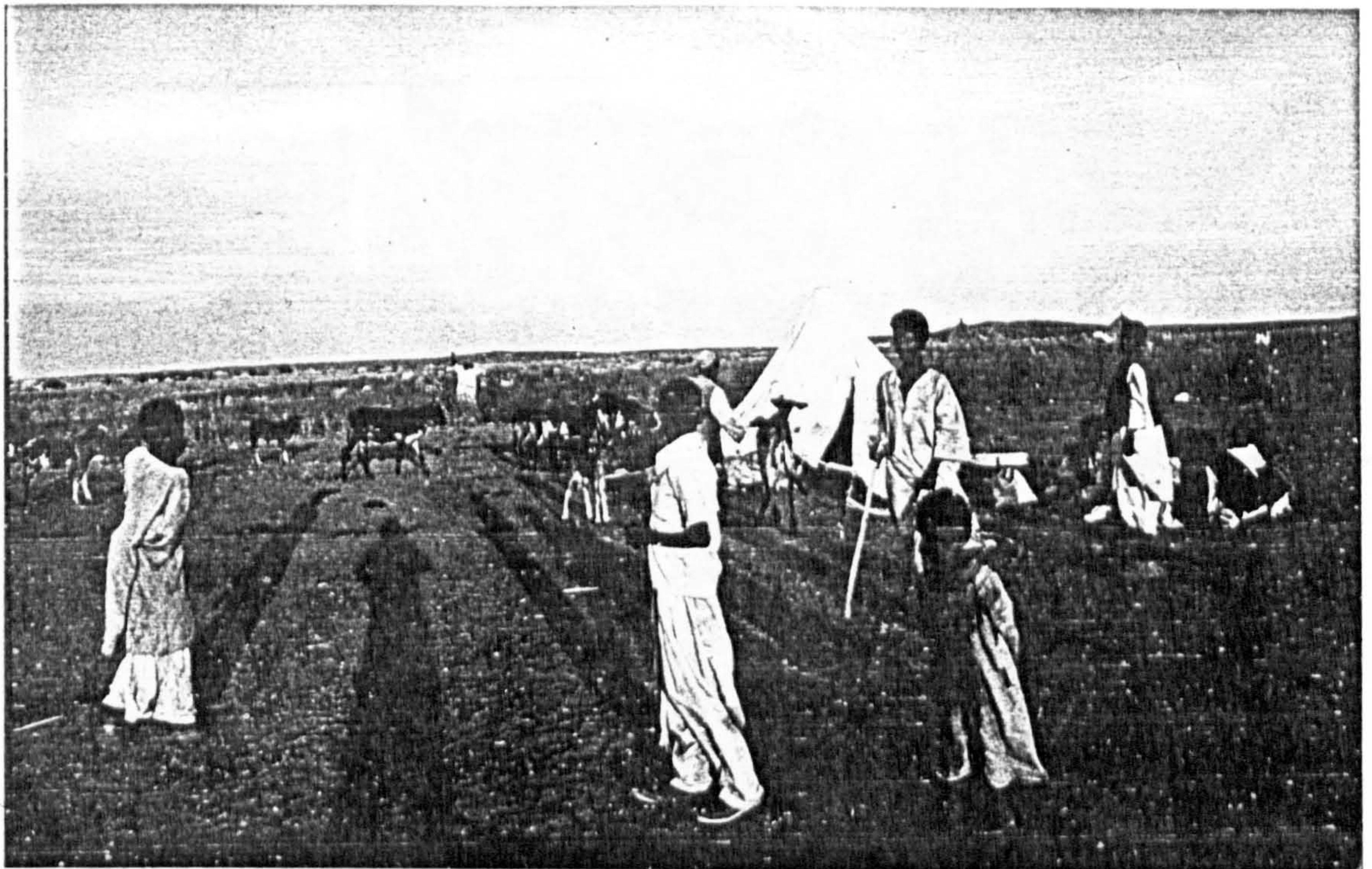


Plate 6.8. Hadendowa young and unmarried men at their nomadic camp shelter.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.9. A Hadendowa boy learns how to use the sword.

(Source: Department of Colour Photography, Ministry of Information, Republic of the Sudan)



Plate 6.10. Hadendowa young men listen to the tribe's folk songs in their nomadic camp shelter.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.11. The group of tents forming the extended family households living in the Hadendowa camp are widely separated from each other.

(Source: The author)

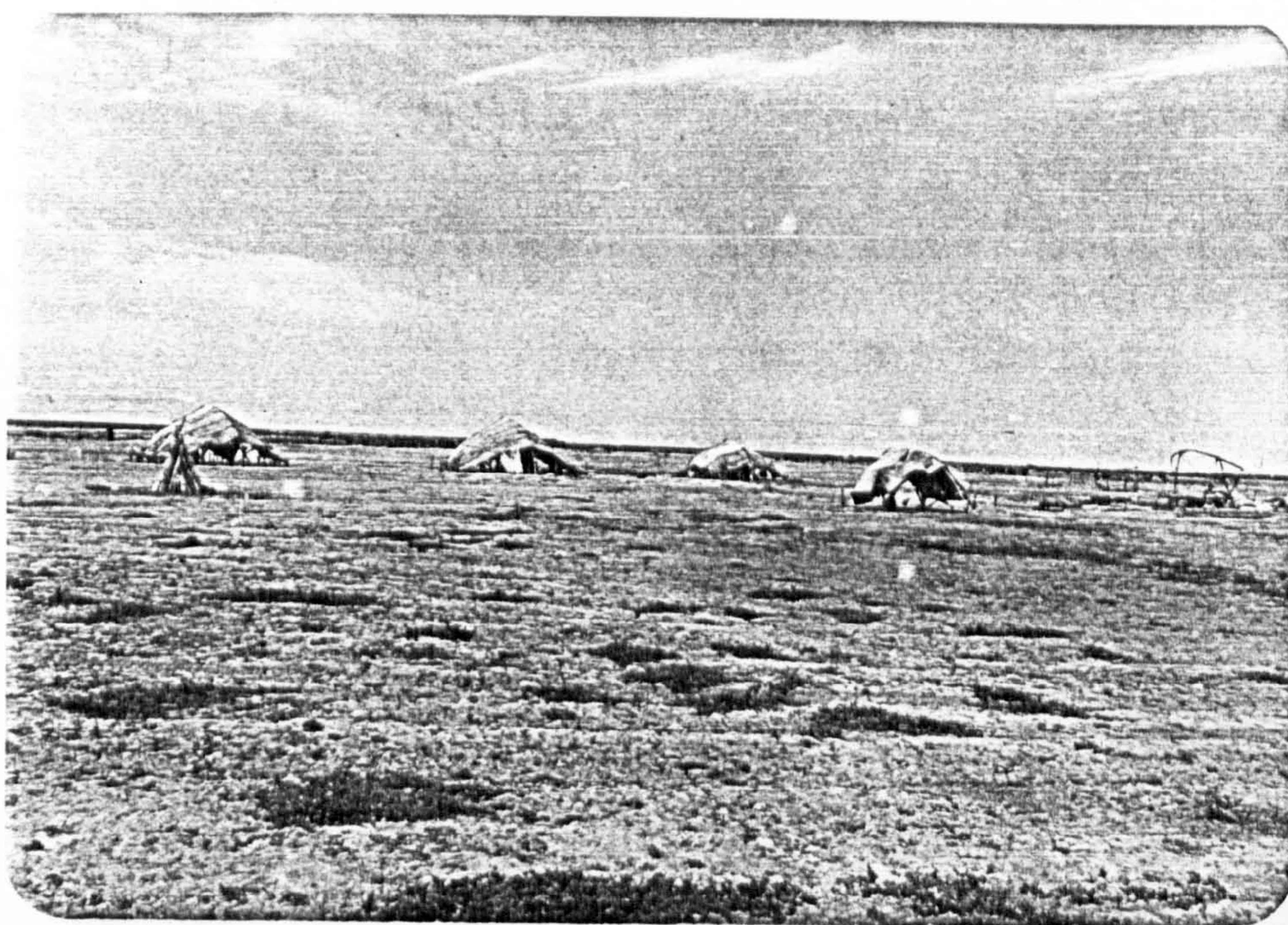


Plate 6.12. The tents of the Hadendowa extended family are separated from each other by a distance of 10-5 m.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.13. The entrance of the Hadendowa tent, as well as its openings intended for ventilation, are all located at a low level.

(Source: The author)

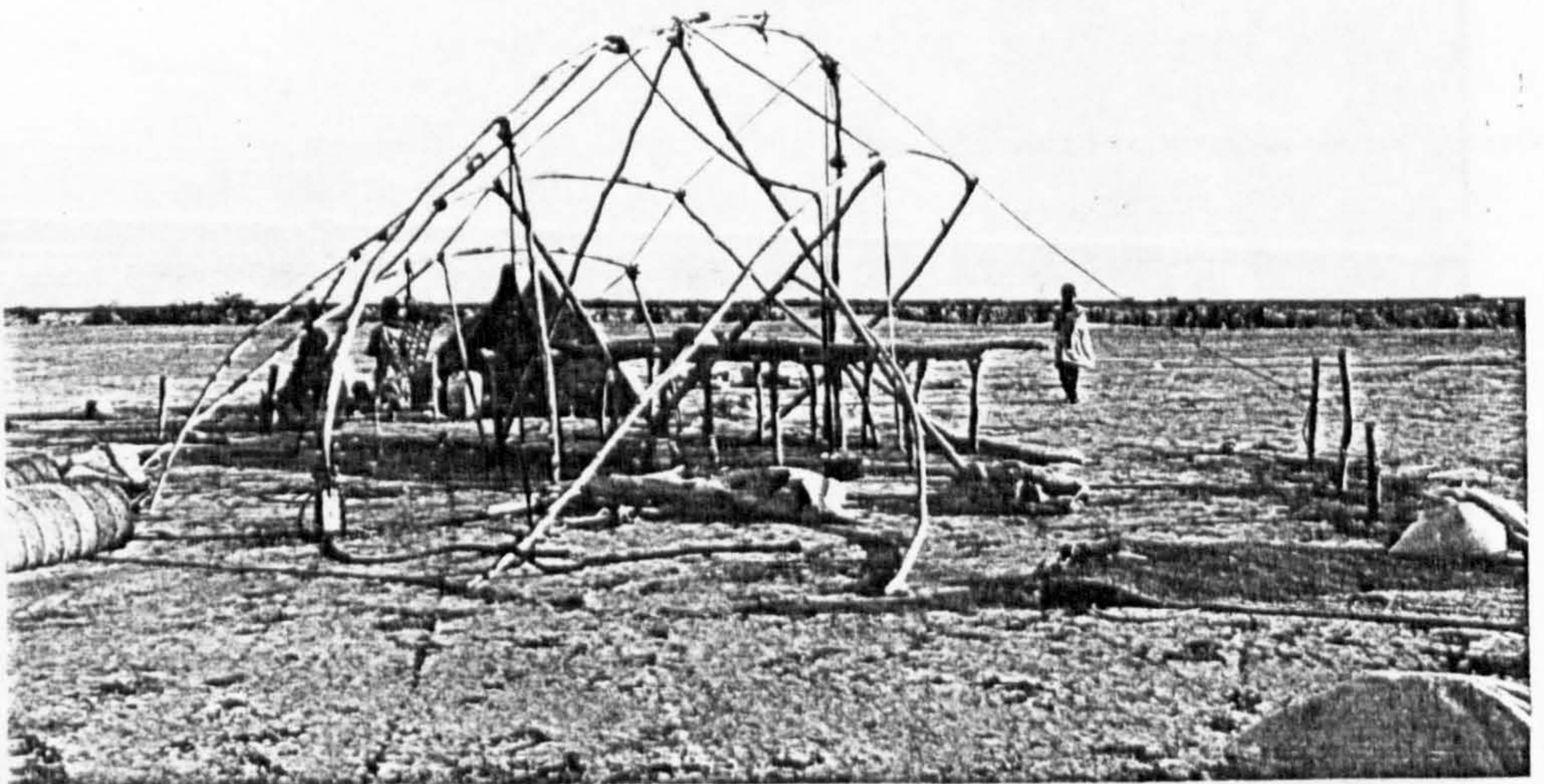


Plate 6.14. The vertical supports of the Hadendowa tent divide its internal space into clearly demarked parts.

(Source: The author)

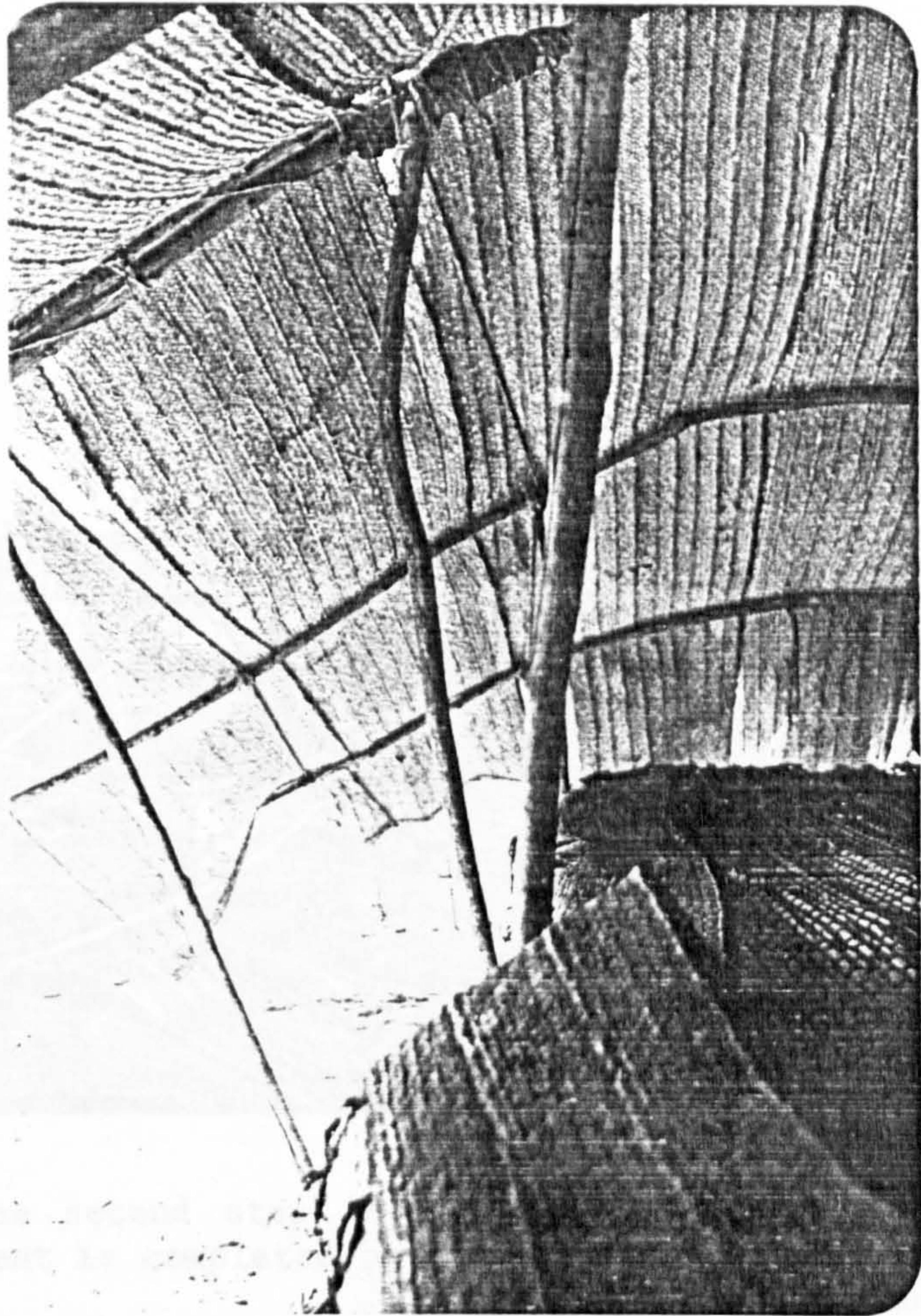


Plate 6.15. The vertical supports of the Hadendowa tent divide its internal space into clearly demarked parts.

(Source: The author)

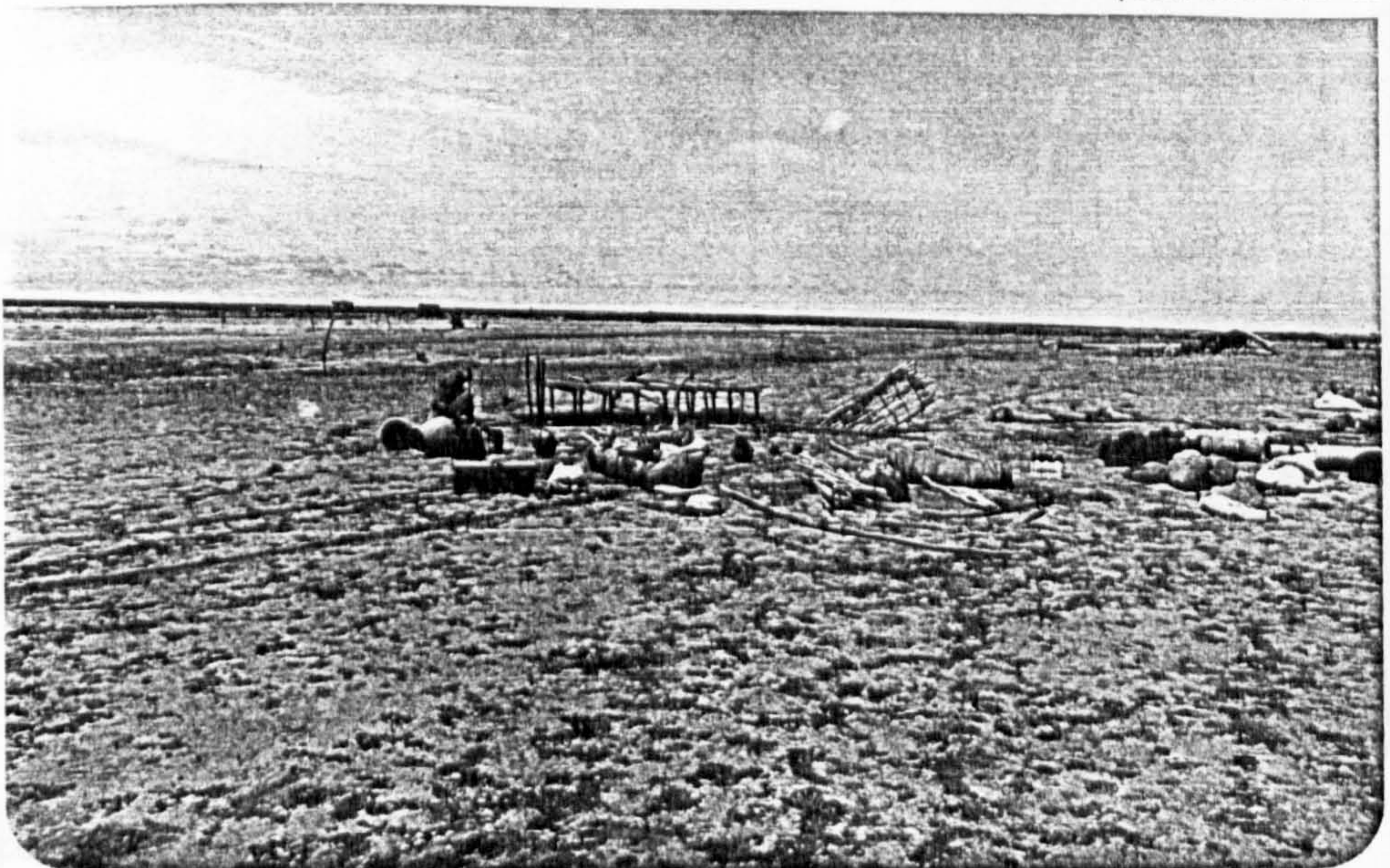


Plate 6.16. The first step in the construction of the Hadendowa tent is the fixing of the raised bed.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.17. The second step in the construction of the Hadendowa tent is completed by erecting the structural frame.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.18. The third step in the construction of the Hadendowa tent is the fixing of the straw mats on the structural frame.

(Source: The author)

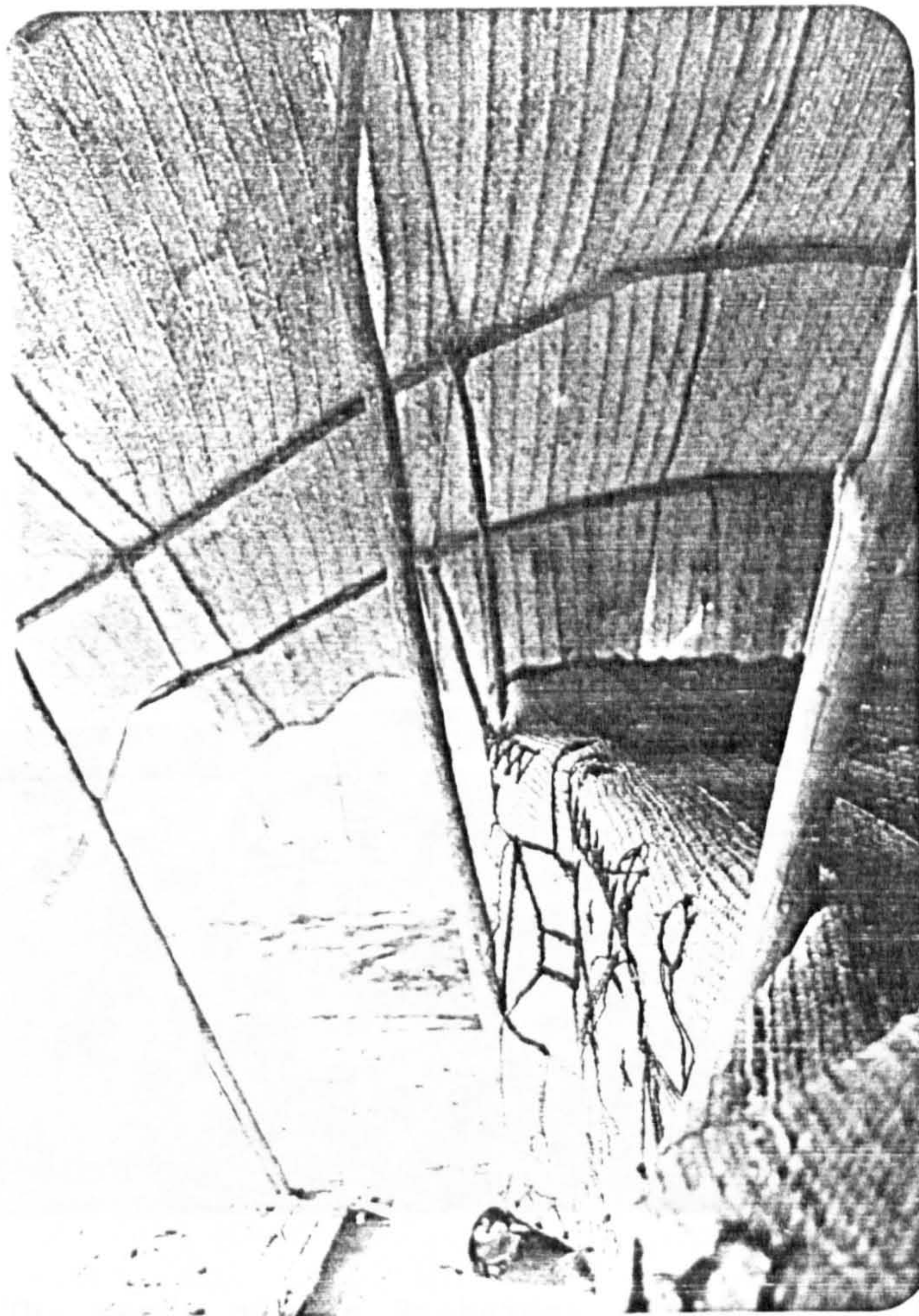


Plate 6.19. The vertical supports which run across the Hadendowa tent clearly divide the space into two parts; one for daytime activities and the other for sleeping.

(Source: The author)

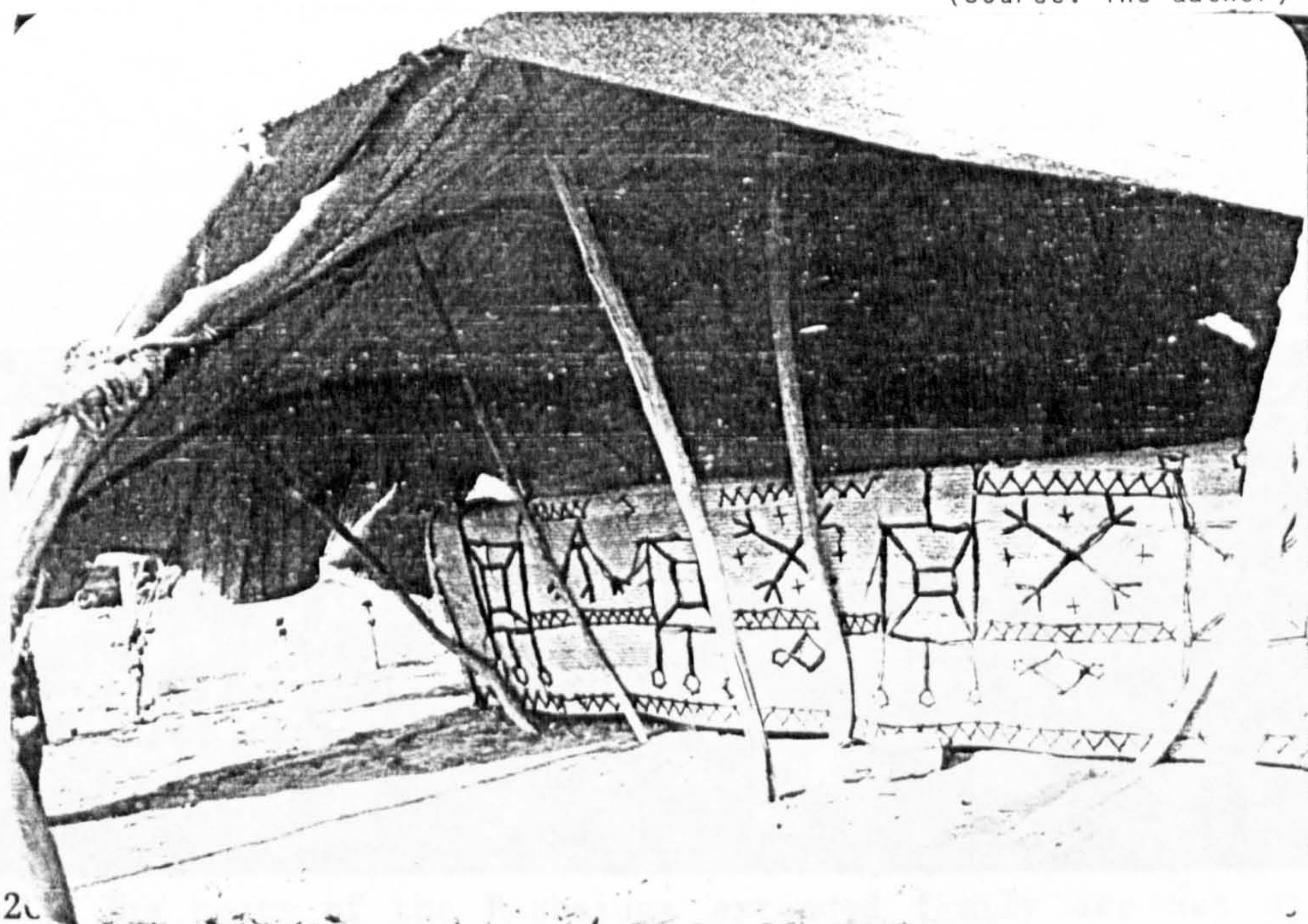


Plate 6.20

divide the bed into two parts; one for the husband and the other for the wife.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.21. The tents of the Rashaidaa extended family are set up widely apart from similar groups of tents inhabited by other extended families.

(Source: The author)

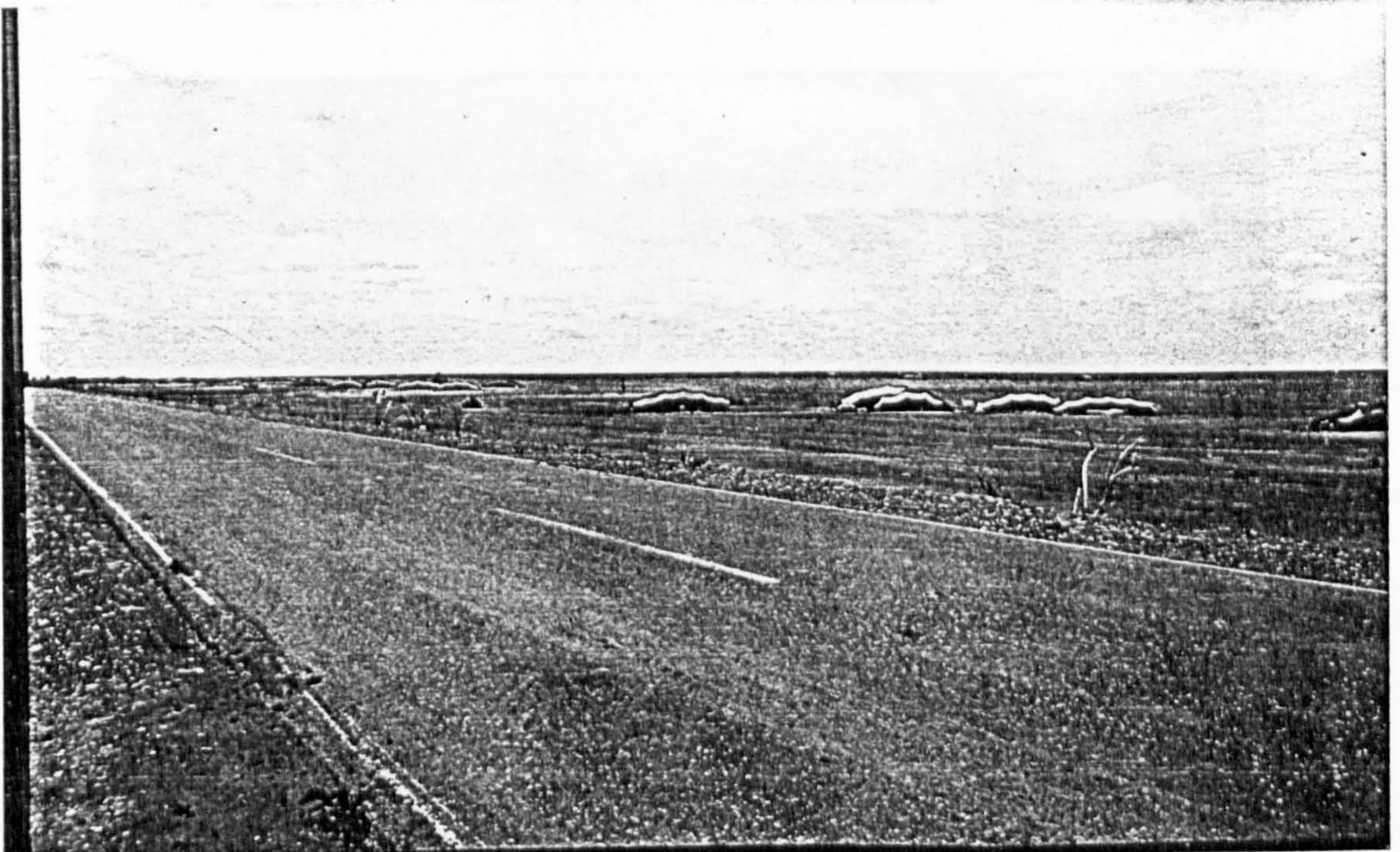


Plate 6.22. The tents of the Rashaidaa extended family are set up widely apart from similar groups of tents inhabited by other extended families.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.23. The tents of the Rashaidaa extended family are set up very close to each other.

(Source: The author)

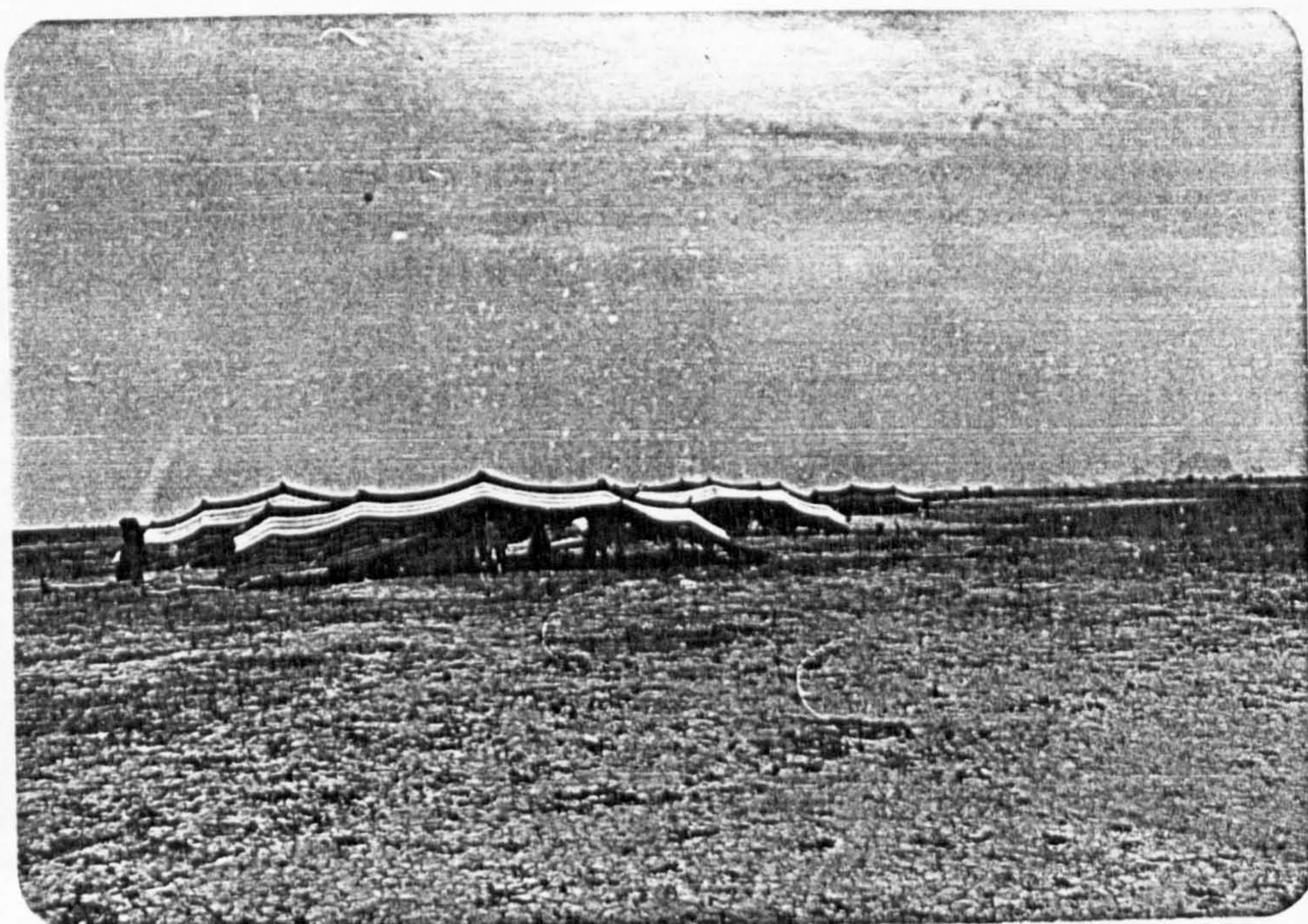


Plate 6.24. The tents of the Rashaidaa extended family are set up very close to each other.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.25. The tents of the Rashaidaa extended family is set up so close to each other to the extent that the suspension ropes used for adjacent tent across each other.

(Source: The author)

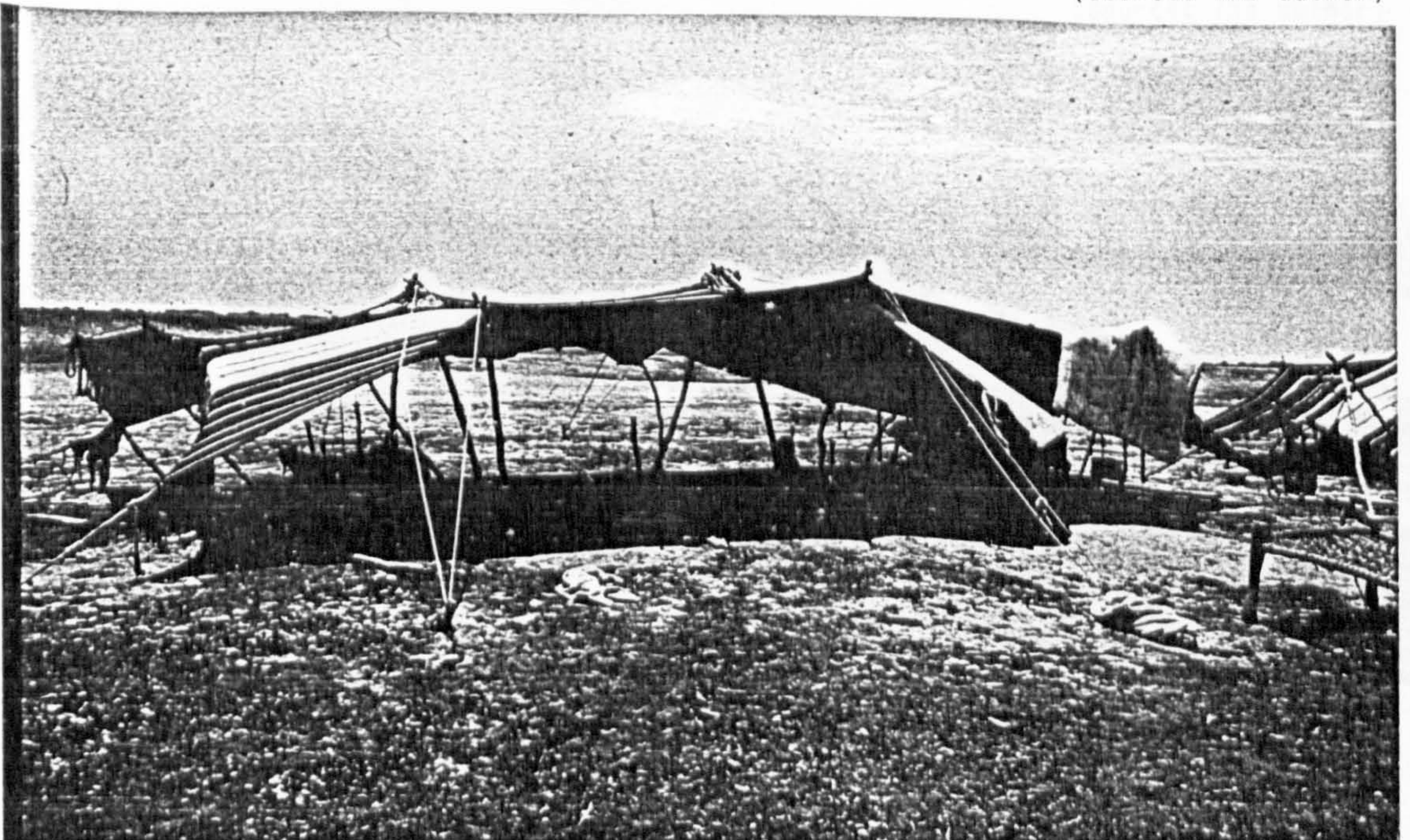


Plate 6.26. The sides of the tent of a migrating Rashaidaa man are lifted in such a way that allows members of the extended family living around to monitor the private life of his family.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.27. The Rashaidaa tent is divided into four parts. While the large central parts are used for living and sleeping the small parts located at the ends are used for storing food rations, baggage and firewood and keeping small animals.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.28. One of the small parts located at one end of the Rashaidaa tent is used for storing firewood and tethering small animals.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.29. The interior of a Rashaidaa household viewed from the entrance of the tent under the open sky.

Plate 6.29. A Rashaidaa woman doing her housework inside the tent of her elementary family.



Plate 6.30. A Rashaidaa woman doing her housework and looking after her children inside the tent of her elementary family.

(Source: The author)

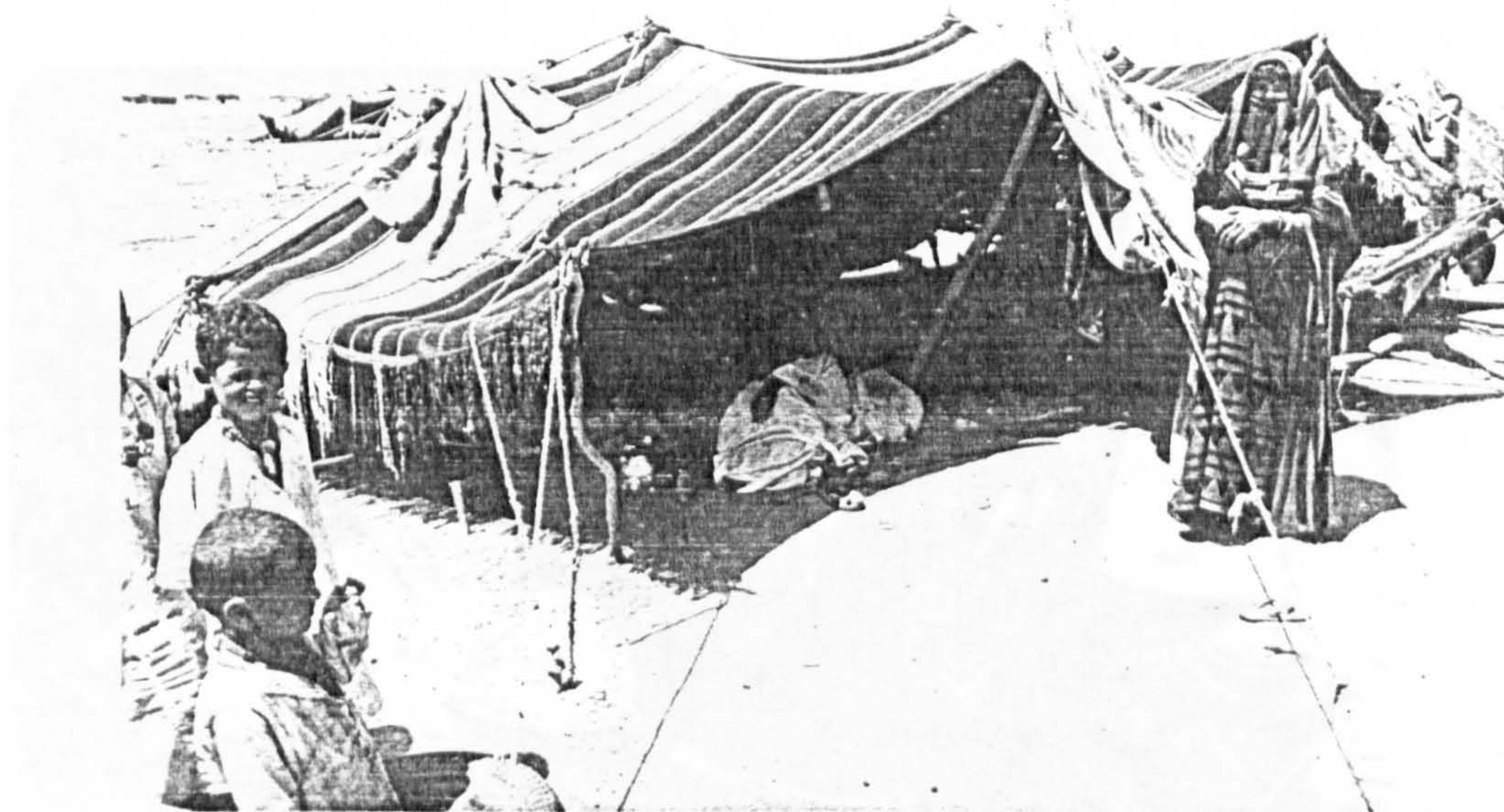


Plate 6.31. The guest of a Rashaidaa household sleeps during the day in front of the tent under the area shaded by the cantilevered part of that tent.

(Source: The author)



Plate 6.32. The tent of a Rashaidaa family divided by a blanket in order to create a separate guest quarter.

(Source: The author)

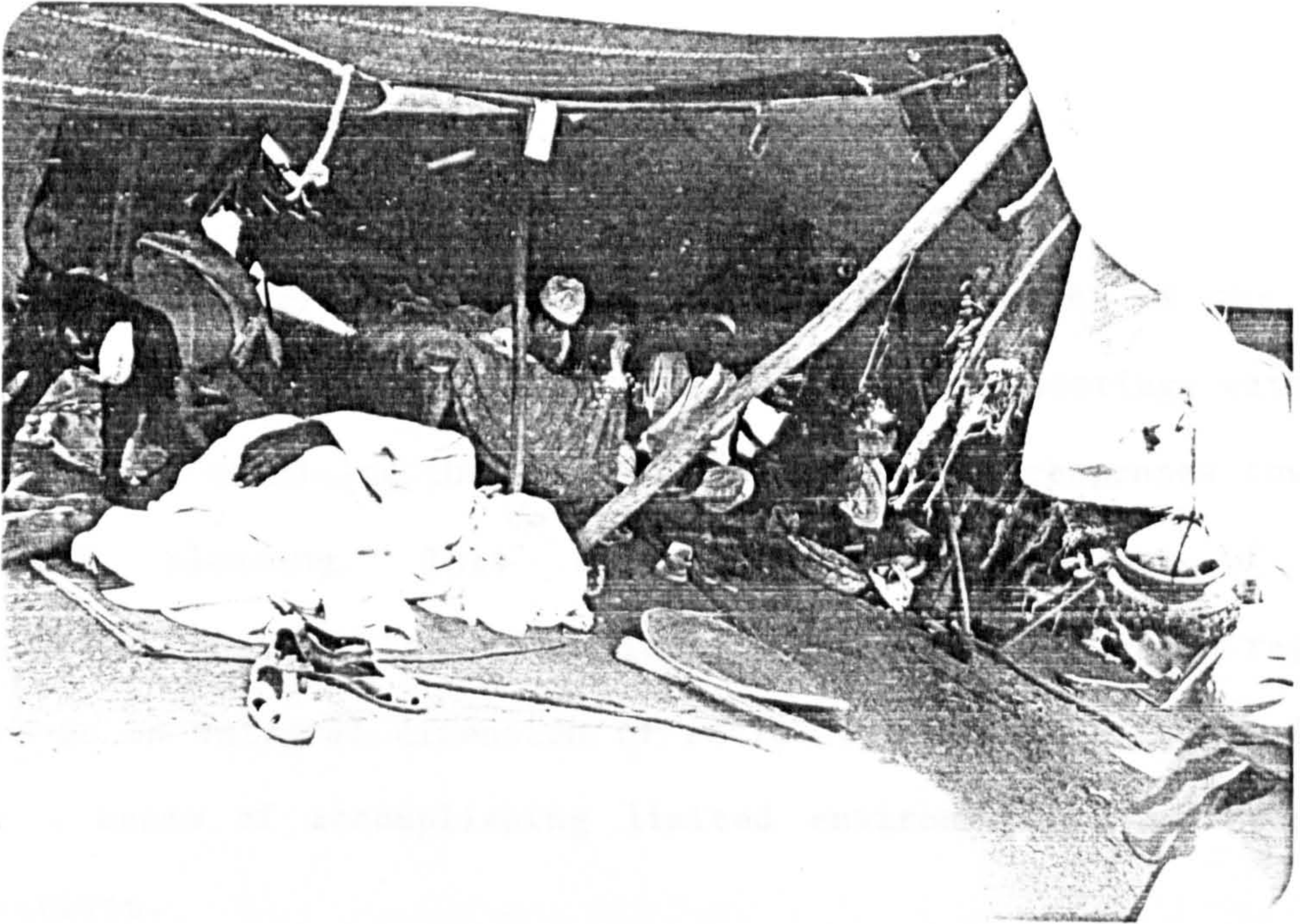


Plate 6.33. A Rashaidaa family entertaining a guest inside their tent.

(Source: The author)

CHAPTER SEVEN

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TOWARDS THE PROBLEM OF DWELLING SPACE: A RE-EXAMINATION.

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter considers the dwelling environment of the Beja and Rashaidaa tribes again, but this time in urban settings with the intention of examining their urban lifestyles and responses towards official planning. This allows a re-examination of the phenomenological approach (formulated in Chapter Four) which regards space as an integral dimension of social and cultural life and not just a means of accomplishing limited environmental and economic objectives.

The chapter presents an examination of the responses of the two tribes towards official planning, and establishes the link between these responses and certain requirements of social and cultural life which the inhabitants are still keen to satisfy. This process is very useful for the purpose of re-examining the phenomenological approach, because the two culturally dissimilar groups examined here - who live together in Kassala the capital of the eastern region of the country - are exposed to many similar circumstances especially those regarding the space standards and development of the dwelling environment.

Both tribes have been allocated similar space standards, and

provided with similar shapes of plots for private and public residential land uses. The development of both private and public space provided for these tribes is controlled by the same building regulations (referred to in Chapter One). Regarding the design of houses, they may be classified into a few types that are allocated to members of both tribes. This could be attributed to the fact that the draughtsmen who prepare these designs usually do so without consulting the house-owners and users. Even the thatch and mud huts, which are constructed by traditional builders from other tribes, and may constitute the individual components of a house, are also similar in terms of spatial characteristics because they are usually built according to inflexible standards that do not consider the specific requirements of the users.

Besides the rigid space standards, Building Regulations, house designs, and built forms imposed on the two tribes the capability of developing and using dwelling space is also constrained by their meagre economic resources. This is not only indicated by their accommodation in fourth class residential areas but also from findings indirectly gleaned through the field studies undertaken as part of this research. Generally, tribespeople who settle in urban areas are considered of low economic status because the rich who own large herds usually remain in the countryside and continue to pursue a nomadic life.

In their urban lifestyle, both tribes rely partially on small scale seasonal cultivation and the raising of a few small animals in order to secure their livelihood. This is made possible by the

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accommodation of these people at the edge of the town. But due to the drought and desertification, which has drastically affected the eastern region of the country, the people are becoming less dependent on such activities.

In their urban life, the economy of the two tribes depends partly on marketing labour; an economic activity which usually entails migration of the young and able-bodied men. As part of this, the men are hired as herders by their tribespeople. The Rashaidaa here, like their tribespeople everywhere, find it easier in comparison with other Sudanese tribes, to migrate and work in the oil-rich Arab states for lucrative wages.⁽¹⁾ Migration for this purpose, in a similar way to the common practice in nomadic life, is organized on a rotational basis among the men of closely related, adjacent households. But it is important to point out that the economy of the people and their potential for development in aspects like housing does not benefit substantially from the revenues ensuing from such migration because the men usually spend it on buying gold jewellery for the women, or marrying another woman. — *Refer*

Men from both tribes are also able to find some jobs and do some business in the town. The Beja are usually recruited for low-income jobs such as night guards and construction workers, and some of the Rashaidaa do occasional business in the livestock market by serving as middlemen for their tribespeople.⁽²⁾ The contribution of the women on such economic activities is considered unacceptable,⁽³⁾ because even in urban areas the livelihood of any

needy woman and that of her family is secured through her kinspeople.

Kassala has an extreme climate with hot summer days (the temperature rises to 42°C) and chilly winter nights (the temperature may fall to about 2°C). The situation is aggravated by the fact that the housing areas in which these groups live is not provided with electricity, and thus the people can not use electrical appliances to cope with the extremities of the weather. In the design and layout of their houses, the groups living in Kassala have also to consider the downpours of the rainy season (the mean during August - the peak of the season - may reach up to 130 mm).⁽⁴⁾ Moreover, the dust storms which are characteristic of this town are also an important point of concern for its inhabitants.⁽⁵⁾

Like most town dwellers, the Beja and Rashaidaa in Kassala have to interact with various other ethnic groups. One of these is a big community of northern Nilotic tribes, such as the Shaigia, Manaseer and Jaalean who migrated from the northern part of the country more than a century ago. A group of West African origin also constitutes a large community in the town. The massive influx of the Eritrean refugees in the previous years has added to the ethnic complexity of the population.

Despite their common exposure together to all these circumstances, the Beja and Rashaidaa living in Kassala have quite different lifestyles. Groups from the two tribes who have settled voluntarily in certain sites in the town have chosen locations

having different characteristics. Other groups from the two tribes who were accommodated in officially planned housing areas have been developing, organizing and using space in a remarkably different manner. This results from, and is related to, the different way in which inhabitants from each tribe deviate from and improvise on prepared planning proposals and house designs, break the building regulations and instruct the traditional builders with regard to the layout of the house components and orientation of each of these components. These variations clearly demonstrate the strong link between their socio-cultural characteristics and their organization and use of space. Thus in order to test the phenomenological approach formulated in Chapter Four this chapter aims to examine and establish links between the responses of these tribes, and certain basic requirements of their social and cultural life. As mentioned above this examination is mainly based on observing groups living in Kassala.

The examination of the responses of these tribes towards official planning is based on observations of groups from the two tribes - the Shaiab and Amarrar Beja and Baratiekh Rashaidaa - who are accommodated together in the Banat South housing scheme (Fig. 3.2). Observations were also made on groups from the two tribes who are accommodated in different housing areas - the Beja in the New Halanga (Fig. 3.1) and the Rashaidaa Baraasa in Mastura (Fig. 3.3) - which are allocated similar space standards and almost identical plots of land for the various residential land uses.

The data on which this examination is based was mainly

gathered through the author's field studies which took place during several visits to Kassala during the period from December 1982 to October 1986. Data were collected through personal observation and unstructured interviews. The part of these studies which investigated officially planned housing areas included both public and private space. Regarding private space housing plots, the studies covered surveyed about 40% of the partly or fully built plots out of about 400 plots inhabited by Beja families and about 480 plots inhabited by Rashaidaa.

The sample of houses were selected in such a way that made it as representative as possible of the general responses of the two tribes towards official policy and practice. For example it includes plots that are overdeveloped and overcrowded, as well as others that are underdeveloped and inhabited by very few people. It includes plots which are built of traditional materials and building techniques, together with others which are built of red bricks and concrete roofs. It also includes plots which are located towards the centre of the housing areas together with others which are located at the edges of such areas.

Besides these field studies by the author, the data included are also based on other studies which have investigated the urban life of the two tribes. Although these latter studies have dealt with the subject in a general manner, some of them had specifically examined the life of the tribes in Kassala.

In line with the hierarchial analysis of dwelling space

presented in Chapter Four the examination of the responses of the two tribes towards this space here is also considered level by level starting with the high environmental level of the whole town and ending with that of the things that are regarded important foci inside individual rooms. At each of these levels, the examination involves linking the organization, development and utilization of space with certain basic requirements of social and cultural life.

Part One of the chapter examines the urban lifestyle and responses of the Beja tribe towards official housing policy and practice. Part Two follows the same process with regards to the Rashaidaa tribe. Part Three compares the organization, development and utilization of dwelling space by each one of these tribes along three basic dimensions of social and cultural life. Through such comparisons, this chapter paves the way to the following one which aims to draw conclusions about the value of adopting a phenomenological approach, and the usefulness of such approach for addressing the current housing *policy*.

7.2. THE URBAN LIFESTYLE AND RESPONSES OF THE BEJA TRIBES TOWARDS OFFICIAL PLANNING AND PRACTICE.

7.2.1 THE LEVEL OF THE WHOLE TOWN.

Groups of the Beja who abandoned the nomadic lifestyle and chose to settle in the town of Kassala during the past three decades have always settled in remote sites at the edges of the town even when there were vacant areas near the town centre. The

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Hadendowa settled in the inhospitable area at the foot of Mukram hill, and with other Beja groups in and around the housing area of the New Halanga; the Norab in, and to the north of, the re-planned area which carries the same name ^{of} as this section of the tribe; and the Shaiab and Amarar on the south western edges of the town (Fig. 7.1). Besides their remoteness from the town centre, the settlements of this tribe are made more inconspicuous through certain elements of landscape. The hemispherical, monochromatic ^{Colors of the tent} tents of the Hadendowa set at the foot of Mukram hill are hardly distinguished from the surrounding boulders, and the settlements strung along the banks of the Gash, north of the New Halanga area, are almost invisible to passers-by because of the thick ^{wood} forest which cover the area. In such remote sites, these Beja tribes lived for about three decades side by side, and far away from other non-Beja groups without any report of serious clashes between themselves.

The nature of the location of these urban settlements, with regard to their remoteness and camouflage with elements of landscape, is similar to those selected for their nomadic camps. Although the choice of remote sites here could be because these groups want to be near to grazing areas in order to support the small animals which they keep, it could also be explained by the aloofness of the Beja tribes and their suspicion of strangers. (6) This is clearly indicated by the case of the Shaiab and Amarar who were previously accommodated in the Banat housing scheme. When their area was surrounded by other non-Beja groups, they became discontented with the situation and asked to be re-housed in a location further away at the edge of the town in the Banat south extension. (7)

7.2.2 THE LEVEL OF OVERALL HOUSING AREAS.

At this level we examine the impact of social and cultural life and services associated with them which are aimed at the whole community, on public space. Community administration is one of the important features of the urban lifestyle of the Beja. Their group living in Banat south is, to a great extent, administered by an unofficially elected senior who operates from a small shelter built far away from the houses in the open space located at the south eastern corner of the community area (Fig. 4.2, Plate 4.) During day-time the senior meets members of the community and deals with their problems (Plate 7.1), as well as the general affairs of the whole community. In dealing with such matters, he is also offered advice by elderly and experienced community members who usually attend at the shelter especially if the senior is receiving guests. Thus, beside its use as an office for community administration, the shelter also serves as a guest house in which guests of the community are entertained and offered hospitality and sleep if they spend the night in the community area. This is similar to what happens at the guest tree and Quranic school in the nomadic lifestyle.

This shelter also serves religious, educational and social purposes besides the administrative ones, as it accommodates the Quranic school which is considered an important institution in the Beja social life (Plates 7.2 to 7.3). Through this the benefits of the school and its teachers is extended beyond teaching the boys of

the community, as it also includes advising other age groups on religious matters and offering them healing services. The religious significance of the shelter is also enhanced by its nearness to the area cleared and prepared (Plate 7.4) for performing the collective prayers which are led by the senior man and joined by the men of the community.

The Beja community living in the New Halanga housing area is not administered by a single senior man but rather by all the men of the community who undertake this in a collective manner. This is facilitated through informal meetings held in a similar kind of shelter to that used in Banat south as it also serves as a guest house. It is also built outside the community area beside the main road running to the east side of the area (Fig. 4.1).

The accommodation of the shelters in the forefront of Banat south, and the New Halanga community areas, is compatible with the important value satisfied through using the shelters as guest houses; which is the reception and accommodation of the community guests without diminishing the privacy of the women at the houses. Through this spatial arrangement, the guests, whether they approach the area from the town, or the countryside, can reach the shelter without crossing the houses (Figs. 4.1, and 4.2).

The socio-religious life of these Beja communities is not limited by the boundaries of the shelter accommodating the Quranic school and the clearing nearby used for performing the collective prayers as there are also other places associated with this life.

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For example, the mosque in the Banat south housing area (Plate 7. and Plate 7.5), despite its very modest construction, accommodates important religious activities. The significance of these activities, which usually take place in the evenings, is indicated by the community effort in the high level of up-keep of the mosque ^{Compound} site. It is also indicated by the community effort in maintaining a continuous supply of firewood (Plate 7.6) for lighting purposes, as well as heating during chilly winter nights which is considered a demanding task due to the effect of desertification of the eastern region. This socio-religious phenomenon, which is attributed to affiliation to certain Sufi sects, is also a feature of the lifestyle of many semi-nomadic Beja communities, such as those living around Waggar (Plate 7.7).

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Besides the shelters referred to above, which serve as a meeting point for the men of the community and a place for entertaining the guests, the arcades of the shopping centre of the New Halanga housing area also serve similar social objectives. As the Beja men always carry their coffee-making utensils around wherever they go, such arcades are usually converted into coffee houses in which the men of the community spend the day and entertain their guests away from the houses thus securing more privacy for the women. This practice, which is considered a common feature of the Beja urban lifestyle, takes different forms in the Banat south community area. The shopping centre has not yet been built, and the men congregate around corner shops instead; an aspect we deal with when considering the following environmental level of the neighbourhood unit.

The arcades of the shopping centre may not be a suitable place for some occasions involving the men of the community and their guests. For example, the gatherings of the tribesmen preceding weddings usually require ample space for the accommodation of traditional dancing and mock fighting. For this purpose, the two Beja communities examined here use sites outside their community area, despite provision of open spaces inside the area and the fact that weddings are usually associated with particular households of the community. The community living in Banat south accommodates the gatherings in an open space on the southern side of the community area (Fig. 4.2), and those living in the New Halanga in a similar open space located between the community area and the banks of the Gash (Fig. 4.1). The spatial relation between these sites and the houses, which resembles that connecting the tents of the nomadic camps with the domains of young men around which the tribesmen usually congregate for weddings, expresses the high concern of the Beja about the privacy of the women in the houses.

Besides the public places already referred to, which serve the whole community, the social life of the Beja men within the neighbourhood units also revolve around certain public places, e.g. communal residences. But despite their public nature, such places are restricted only to the very close relatives of the residents. This is clearly indicated by the difficulties that we faced in our field study and the reluctance of community members to accompany strangers to these parts of the community area despite their knowledge of the reason behind the visit. The nature of these public places varies with demographic characteristics of the people living

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in the neighbourhood unit. Residents of units which include batchelors and grown-up boys (above the age of six or seven) erect communal residences for the accommodation of these categories, as they do not live with the families inside the housing plots. Such residences are usually located in an open space near the houses because their residents serve, and are served by, these houses especially with regard to provision of meals.

These communal residences are called Khalwas - literally Quranic schools. Although they do not provide religious and educational services on a regular basis, like those referred to above which serve the whole community, this name may be linked to the small clearing provided there and used by the men of the neighbourhood in performing the daily prayers individually or in groups. Besides the clearing, the Khalwa which is surrounded by a hedge, and measures about 50-60 sq. m. also consists of a shelter and shady trees. In this shelter and the enclosed court surrounding it, the batchelors and boys of the neighbourhood live together and organize whatever work is assigned to them by the community. As they live here they also have to keep the place clean and its trees watered and protected from straying goats which are important duties, because the Khalwa is regarded and used as the living room and reception of the whole neighbourhood where its men meet and entertain their visiting close relatives.

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Figure 4.1 shows an example of a neighbourhood unit from the New Halanga housing area demonstrating the spatial relationship between the Khalwa located in the public open space and

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the surrounding houses. Such a spatial pattern is repeated in more than one neighbourhood unit in this community area. It is important to point out however that provision of these open spaces is not a condition for building this kind of communal residence. In some neighbourhoods in Banat which were not provided with such open space Khalwas were built at the edge of the neighbourhood (Fig. 4.2).

The Khalwa is not usually built inside a neighbourhood unit which does not accommodate grown-up children or bachelors, as is clear from several cases in these two Beja community areas. In such cases the men of the neighbourhood meet each other and entertain visiting close kin, around corner shops, and not in front of the houses as is the custom in many urban areas in the Sudan. For this purpose, these places are provided with straw mats and locally made beds on which the men and their guests sit. Trees are also planted around these places in order to secure shade during day-time, and the importance of this is indicated by the tree planted for this purpose in the middle of a road near a corner shop in the Banat south community area (plate 7.8). At sunset a gaslight provided by the shopkeeper enables the men to stay for an hour or two, after which they disperse to spend the night with their wives in the houses (Plate 7.9).

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The men of the neighbourhood spend most of their leisure time during the day around the corner shop preparing and drinking coffee from the utensils which they carry in their handbags (Plates 7.10 to 7.13), as it is considered unacceptable for a man to stay at home at this time of the day without a good reason. At these places they

entertain their guests over coffee cups and receive news of their distant kinspeople and remote territories of the tribe. As they gather, the men of the neighbourhood also help each other in various ways, i.e. by reading letters for illiterate people or giving a haircut to those who need it (Plates 7.12 to 7.13). Thus the places around these corner shops could be considered as a social club, coffee house, information centre and barber shop amongst other things judging by the diversified services which they offer.

Figure 4.2 shows the public places around the corner shops where men from various parts of the Banat south community area, gather and entertain their guests. These places, considered together with the Khalwas which are located inside some neighbourhood units, are aimed at similar objectives to those served by the shelters of the young men, the Quranic school and the guest tree of the nomadic camp. In a similar way to the public places of the nomadic lifestyle, those serving the urban neighbourhoods here indicate the desire of the Beja to offer hospitality to their guests in a co-operative way without diminishing the privacy of their women. It also indicates their concern about rearing the boys away from their mothers.

7.2.3 THE LEVEL OF HOUSING BLOCKS.

The concern of these Beja groups with segregation between the men and women is evident not only in the development of the public places referred to above, but also in the effort to demark public space accommodating these places from the private space

provided for housing plots. To achieve this, some allottees build high mud walls (ranging between 1.8-2 m. high) (Plates 7.14 to 7.15). Those who can not afford to build a mud wall usually demark their plots by thorny hedges, lengths of sack or just a row of tree branches (Plates 7.16 to 7.18). The concern of the people about demarking their plots by all the available means is evident in the fact that about 65% of the developed plots in the New Halanga were surrounded by hedges, tree branches and sack lengths. The use of widely spaced tree branches (about 80 cm. apart) as boundary walls, which occurred in about 10% of the sample examined, indicates that these walls are not employed only to keep away straying domestic animals, but also as cues intended to discourage trespassing by passers-by which is important in this urban situation where the Beja are surrounded by culturally dissimilar groups.

Concern about demarking boundaries of housing plots is evident not only with regard to boundaries separating the plots from the surrounding roads, but also those separating adjacent plots. In many cases as in Banat south, boundary walls and barriers, are used to separate plots accommodating closely related households such as those of brothers or a father and his sons (Figures 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, and 7.5 and Plates 7.19 to 7.20, and 7.21 to 7.22).

This use of boundary walls and barriers corresponds to the use of physical distance for separating the different domains and various tents of the nomadic camp. In a similar way to the situation in nomadic lifestyle, the use of these barriers can be explained by a desire to secure high levels of privacy for the elementary

families living in housing plots.

7.2.4 THE LEVEL OF HOUSING PLOTS.

Besides the use of boundary walls and barriers, interaction between each housing plot and its adjacent plots and roads is also curtailed through certain other design measures and built forms which are initiated by the house-owners and executed by traditional builders. This is achieved through building the rooms of the house towards the centre of the plot rather than its boundaries, as indicated by (Figs. 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4). Interaction between the private life inside housing plots, and the public one taking place in the roads is also curtailed through orientating the rooms of the house and opening them towards the sides and back of the plot rather than towards its entrance gate or roadside. (Figs. 7.7 (1), (2) and (3)). Out of the sample examined in the two Beja community areas under consideration here, the number of plots with rooms facing towards the roads does not exceed 20%.

The fact that each housing plot in these two areas usually accommodates a single elementary family, limits social interaction between such families. In the few cases which do not follow this norm (not exceeding 5% of the sample examined), rooms accommodating various elementary families within the same plot are not facing each other, and do not open together towards the central courtyard of the house. This is demonstrated by the cases of plots no. 14 and 15 and in Fig. 7.2, plot no. 63 in Fig. 7.4, plot no.125 in Fig.7.5 and plot no. 2 in Fig. 7.7. Such spatial organization

reduces interaction by limiting visual contact and direct access between rooms inhabited by various families. This spatial organization also diminishes the role of the central courtyard of the house as an important place of social interaction.

These measures diminish interaction within housing plots, as well as between the plot and its adjacent plots and roads, ^{and} secures high levels of privacy for elementary families living within such plots. In this respect, these measures could be considered as an alternative for the wide dispersal and careful screening of the tents of the nomadic camps which have the same objective.

7.2.5 THE LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL ROOMS: ACCOMMODATING A SINGLE ELEMENTARY FAMILY.

In both Beja community areas examined here, individual rooms, irrespective of their size and shape, house a single elementary family although a room inhabited by a divorced or widowed kinswoman who has no children living with her may also accommodate a grown up girl whose parents live in the same plot or nearby. Plot no. 14 block no. 33 in Banat south (Fig. 7.2) is an example of such accommodation. An open, or partially closed shed, may be erected in front of such rooms which are used by the women during the hot hours of the day.

Interaction between the interior space of such rooms and the surrounding area within the housing plot is usually limited through certain design measures and architectural features, especially if

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the plot is not surrounded by a boundary wall which controls visual contact. Enclosing the shed located in front of the room is one of these measures which was taken by the households whose plots are not surrounded by a mud boundary wall. Households whose resources are very limited usually use whichever materials available, i.e. scrap metal and rags, in order to enclose the sheds (Plates 7.23 to 7.25). The use of such sheds as a buffer zone is enhanced by arranging its entrance at a right angle to that of the room to which it is attached (Fig. 7.8 and Plates 7.26 to 7.28) and thus limiting visual contact between the interior space of the room and the area that surrounds it.

The circular mud and thatch huts which are the most widely used types of room in the two community areas examined here usually have small windows measuring about 40 cm x 40 cm (Plates 7.29, and 7.30 and 7.31). Even with these small windows woollen curtains are sometimes used to ensure more privacy for the elementary family inhabiting the room (Plates 7.32 and 7.33). The limiting effect on ventilation inside the room caused by these measures is made more tolerable for the women, whose life is mostly restricted to these rooms, by the light and well ventilated traditional dress used by this tribe (Plates 3.1 and 3.2).

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These measures act in a similar way to the straw mats which carefully cover the nomadic tent and the wide distance which separates the tents to secure high levels of privacy for the elementary families inside individual rooms. The great concern of the Beja about privacy is supported by the difficulties which we

faced when we tried to gain access to this part of the house during our field study in these two community areas.

7.2.6. THE LEVEL OF THE THING: THE OBJECTS THAT ARE CONSIDERED IMPORTANT FOCI INSIDE THE ROOM.

The main objects which occupy the rooms in the houses of the two Beja communities are still the straw mat on which the woman of the house sits on the ground to do her housework and entertain visiting folkwomen, and the large raised bed in which the wife and husband sleep with their small children. With the exception of only one case, in all the rooms examined here, whether large or small, of rectangular or circular plan, both the mat and bed maintained the same place which they occupy in the nomadic tent; the mat in the forefront and the bed in the rear part of the room to ensure maximum privacy. (Plates 7.34 to 7.39). Privacy at that innermost part of the room is enhanced by the poor lighting due to the small size of the windows, characteristic of the huts widely used in these two community areas.

Despite the fact that the settled lifestyle of these two groups and the large size of the rooms built for them which permits more space and headroom than the nomadic tents and makes it possible for them to acquire and use more pieces of furniture the rooms in their community areas are still restricted to certain age, sex and kin groups. None of the rooms examined provided facilities for accommodating grown-up boys, bachelors or guests. This is clearly confirmed by the places described earlier which are

especially built and prepared for the entertainment and accommodation of these categories.

7.3 THE URBAN LIFESTYLES AND RESPONSES OF THE RASHAIDAA TRIBE TOWARDS OFFICIAL HOUSING POLICY AND PRACTICE.

7.3.1 THE URBAN LEVEL OF THE WHOLE TOWN.

The first settlement of the nomadic Rashaidaa in the town of Kassala was formed more than forty years ago when a group of the Gaziezza branch started to gather and camp in the big open space located to the west of the railway station (Fig. 7.1). Members of this branch whose livelihood depends mainly on animal husbandry, still live illegally together in the same part of the town despite the fact that this area is surrounded now by housing extensions and a large factory to the extent that it has become overcrowded with camping tents (Plates 7.40 to 7.41). The Gaziezza are not showing interest in the housing schemes intended for the Rashaidaa in other parts of the town, as they are waiting to be housed together in a separate area.

The second big group of the Rashaidaa - mostly from the Baraasaa and Baratiekh branches - arrived in Kassala about thirty years ago and settled together in a site next to the fields surrounding the south western edge of the town, and the road which links it to the capital Khartoum (Fig. 7.1). But encroachment of straying animals which support the economy of the group on the fields nearby incited the local authorities to move the whole group

further away from the town to a location used later for re-housing part of this group.

During their sojourn in the new location, friction and fighting often erupted between the two Rashaidaa branches living together.⁽⁸⁾ As a consequence of this the two branches were rehoused during the mid-seventies in different areas; the Baraasaa in the same location which was replanned and the Baratiekh in another site a few miles away, across the motorway linking Kassala to Khartoum. (Fig. 7.1).

Dispersal of the three Rashaidaa branches in different areas in Kassala (Fig. 7.1), as a result of a voluntary choice or as a means of avoiding friction, reflects the social distance and lack of co-operation between these branches. This distance is also indicated by the failure of the Government to administer the whole tribe by a single chief in a similar way to other tribes in the region like the Hadendowa.⁽⁹⁾

The nature of the sites of the settlements of the Rashaidaa in which they stayed for decades in Kassala resembles that of the preferred locations for nomadic camps; as in both cases the sites selected are set in an open area and near to main roads and railway stations. This choice could be linked to the general attitude and willingness of the tribespeople to establish links with strangers; an aspect expressed by their norms regarding hospitality to guests and manifest in their responses in nomadic camps, as well as in urban neighbourhoods.

7.3.2. THE LEVEL OF OVERALL HOUSING AREAS.

The examination at this level focuses on the use of public space for social services, administrative, educational and religious activities which are aimed towards the whole community living in the housing areas. For this purpose, the examination mainly considers the case of Mastura, which is intended exclusively for households from the Rashaidaa tribe.

Managing and administering the community affairs in Mastura, through representatives, does not usually take place in a particular office located in the central area nor in the arcades of the local market or within the compound of the main mosque of the housing area, as is the custom in many urban areas in the country. These representatives manage the community affairs from their houses and deal individually with various matters which mainly centre around securing and distributing basic commodities such as petrol, sugar and flour. The operation of the management duties in this manner indicates that the community does not recognize a single administrative body, and this supports the conclusion of William Young that the socio-political structure of the Rashaidaa in urban areas is still segmented in a similar way to that of their nomadic lifestyle, into lineages and extended families.⁽¹⁰⁾

In terms of the central religious facilities, the community of Mastura is served by a big mosque (floor plan about 18 x 18 sq. m.) built through donations from the oil rich Arab states and located in

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the central area of public facilities (Fig. 7.3). But the size of this mosque is not compatible with the number of people who attend the Friday and daily collective prayers and who do not usually exceed twelve or fifteen persons. Despite its large size and impressive finish (Plates 7.42 and 7.43), this mosque is not surrounded by a boundary wall, and thus has no clearly demarked courtyard which is considered an important element in mosque building. But, the need for such a compound is not felt here because the use of this mosque is limited to the prayer services, and unlike similar ones located in urban areas inhabited by other ethnic groups it is not used for other purposes such as education of the children, organization of religious ceremonies, and celebrations associated with the naming of babies and writing of a marriage contract.

The low attendance of the Rashaidaa at the mosque is attributed to their insufficient knowledge of the Islamic religion and the high regard to which ^tthey assign collective prayers. (11) X

The insignificant role of the mosque in the community life here could be linked to more than one factor. The Quranic schools, which are usually associated with mosques, do not operate at public places despite substantial subsidies. The few that operate in Mastura are located in private houses and supported by some pious men. The insignificant role of the mosque could also be attributed to the lack of popularity of the Sufi sects associated with religious ceremonies among the Rashaidaa. The limited role of the mosques could also be attributed to the fact that the people here celebrate social occasions - like the naming of newly born babies - in their houses.

Despite the fifteen vacant shops, built by some wealthy Rashaidaa and made available for rent in the shopping centre of Mastura there is no proper coffee house or restaurant operating there. Such services are provided by kiosks whose customers are mostly visiting, non-Rashaidaa construction workers and mechanics (Plates 7.44 and 7.45). The long shady arcades of the centre, which usually bustle with life in urban areas, are almost empty (Plates 7.46 and 7.47). The diminished demand for coffee houses and restaurants and the avoidance of the arcades of the shopping centre can be explained by the fact that Rashaidaa men usually spend their day at the houses with their families where they also entertain their guest^s and offer them hospitality. (Plates 7.48 and 7.49).

After the elapse of more than a decade since the replanning of Mastura, and despite provision of ample space for the central area of public facilities, and the development of some buildings there, the use of space to accommodate many requirements of social life is still similar to that characteristic of the nomadic lifestyle. Community administration, informal education of the children and entertainment of guests are some examples of the activities and social obligations which take place within private houses rather than in a public space.

7.3.3. THE LEVEL OF THE NEIGHBOURHOOD UNIT.

The public open spaces provided in the middle of the neighbourhood units ⁱⁿ to Mansoura and Mastura, which measure 120 sq. m. and 210 sq. m. respectively, are hardly used by the communities

living around them. This is indicated by the underdevelopment of these spaces, as in all those provided in both housing areas only two buildings have been erected so far. One of these is a large mosque constructed in a neighbourhood in Mansoura (Plate 7.50). But similar to that of Mastura, this was also built through donations from the rich Arab states. The other public building erected in these open spaces is a large grocery store in Mastura. Besides the underdevelopment, these open spaces lack maintenance, as both the official and communal efforts towards their cleaning and planting is negligible.

Roads also play a negligible role in social interaction inside the Rashaidaa neighbourhoods in Mansoura and Mastura, because various sex and age groups of the household usually mix freely with each other and with guests who are entertained inside the house without any restrictions (Plates 7.48, 7.49 and 7.50). The small role of the roads may also be because most of the social occasions of the family, such as the naming of babies and celebrating the circumcision of the boys are organized inside the housing plot because they involve only members of the household and close relatives living nearby. Wedding parties are one of the few occasions usually organized in the roads because they require ample space to accommodate the large number of guests and the traditional dancing performed during such occasions (Plates 4.11 and 4.51). But, as food is made and served from the house of the family organizing the occasion, these parties take place in the road located in front of the house and not in a wider one far away or near a public open space.

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Unlike the common practice of urban neighbourhoods inhabited by many other Sudanese ethnic groups, areas around corner shops in Mansoura and Mastura are not considered an important foci of social life (Plate 7.52). This is also because of the focusing of social life inside housing plots where all sex and age groups of the household gather and entertain their guests. This is also demonstrated by cases in the housing areas examined here, where the public life centred around the shops is merged with the private life inside the housing plot adjacent by means of a connecting door between the shop verandah and the courtyard of the house (Fig. 7.9 and Plate 7.53). Another example of this is also demonstrated by the case of plot no. /in Mansoura where a room opening onto a road and licensed as a shop is used without any modifications for accommodating a Rashaidaa family (Plate 7.54 to 7.55).

The insignificant use of public space inside neighbourhood units shows close similarity between urban and nomadic lifestyles of the Rashaidaa, since public places hardly exist in their nomadic camps as pointed out in the previous chapter. After the elapse of more than a decade since the rehousing of the Rashaidaa in Mansoura and Mastura, and despite the fair distribution of public open spaces (Figs. 4.2 and 4.3 and Plate 7.56 and 7.46), the provision of wide roads and availability of corner shops in these areas, the social life of the men, entertainment of the guests and accommodation of most of the social occasions of the household still take place inside housing plots.

7.3.4 THE LEVEL OF THE HOUSING BLOCK.

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Housing blocks, in both Mansoura and Mastura, interact remarkably with their surrounding roads. This is achieved by maintaining visual contact and permitting direct access between the private space in the houses contained within the block and the public space in the surrounding roads. Visual contact is maintained in about 65% of the housing plots examined. This is obtained by boundary walls being only partially built, or built up to a low level - not exceeding 150 or 120 cm. (Plates 7.57, 7.58, 7.59, 7.60, and 7.60).

Direct access to housing blocks from surrounding roads, is also facilitated through partially built boundary walls, or dilapidated parts of these walls which have not been rebuilt (Plates 7.58, 7.59, 7.60 and 7.61). Plots to which access is made possible through these means amounts to about ⁴⁵15% of the sample examined. Access to housing plots through the entrance gate is considered possible for all the plots examined. Most of these gates are closed by just a latch and some of these securing plots of migrating Rashaidaa are fastened only by a length of string which can be untied by any child (Plate 7.62).

Despite the different circumstances of urban lifestyle, and the building regulations, which require erection of high boundary walls around housing plots, it is clear that the Rashaidaa are trying to recreate in Mansoura and Mastura a housing environment

similar to that characteristic of their nomadic lifestyle through allowing members of the community to monitor life inside the plot and have access to it if the need arises. The demand for such measures is justifiable, because patrilineals who may be accommodated in different housing blocks, are still obliged to see to it that the basic needs of their close kin are satisfied and make sure that the families and property of those migrating are preserved.⁽¹²⁾

Despite various measures in the Building Regulations, intended to control interaction between adjacent plots (referred to in Chapter One), there are many examples in Mansoura and Mastura in which visual contact and direct access are still maintained, especially where such plots are inhabited by households belonging to the same extended family. Visual contact is facilitated in about 15% of the sample through building the house along the boundary wall and opening normal level windows overlooking the courtyard of the adjacent plot (Fig. 7.10, Plates 7.63 and 7.64 and Fig. 7.11 Plate Fig. 7.65 and Fig. 7.12, Plate 7.66). In some cases, this is achieved at the expense of the comfort levels inside the rooms of the house; because the location of windows on the eastern and western walls diminishes natural ventilation and admits the sun's rays, thus creating unfavourable conditions, especially considering the hot and semi-desert climate of Kassala⁽¹³⁾ (Fig. 7.10 Plates 7.63 and 7.64 and Fig. 7.11 Plate 2.65 and Fig. 2.12, Plate 7.66). In most of the recently built houses where, in compliance with the Building Regulations, a clearance is allowed between the main building of the house and the boundary wall, the floor level is usually raised (to

about 60-75 cm. above ground level) so that a person standing in one of the rooms can see inside the courtyard of the adjacent plot (Fig. 7.13 and Plates 7.67, 7.68, 7.69, 7.70 and 7.71). This is facilitated by the low levels of the walls separating adjacent plots which vary between 120-150 cm. in height.

Easy and direct access is ensured in 35% of the cases examined here in which adjacent plots are inhabited by households belonging to the same extended family because such plots are not separated by boundary walls, despite the Building Regulations prohibiting this kind of development (referred to in Chapter One). This amalgamation of plots could be considered as a means through which the Rashaidaa try to attain house forms similar to those adopted in their nomadic lifestyle, in which the households of the co-wives and their newly married daughters, as well as the married sons of the man, are located side by side forming a row (Fig. 7.10, Plate 7.72 Fig. 7.14, Plate 7.73 and Fig 7.15, Plate 7.74). In order to attain this house form within the plots allotted to the extended family, some residents have built their houses facing east and west (Fig. 7.10 and Plate 7.72), or along the diagonal of the plot (Fig. 7.14 and Plate 7.73), rather than the north-south orientation which facilitate better shading and higher levels of ventilation.

Through these measures high levels of co-operation are still maintained between members of the extended family living in adjacent plots. Recently married very young women are still trained by their mothers, elder co-wives of their husband and their mothers-in-law,

and as part of this, they are also supervised by these kinswomen. In return the elderly women of the household are also served by the young women living with them. As they live together in this manner, the families of the household are able to cope with the urban life in a better way when they organise the migration of their men for work abroad on a rotational basis according to the common practice of the tribe.

7.3.5 THE LEVEL OF THE HOUSING PLOT.

The most common forms of the houses built within individual housing plots in Mansoura and Mastura can be classified into three main types, according to the method of construction and number of elementary families which they accommodate. The first type consists of a group of circular thatch or mud huts, each of which, together with the shed that may be erected in front of it usually accommodates an elementary family. In about 65% of the sample examined of this house type the huts open into the central courtyard of the house which may be partly covered by a shed if individual sheds are not built in front of each hut. Fig. 7.16 a and b and Plates 7.75, 7.76, 7.77 and 7.78 demonstrate and show examples of this house type. In most of the plots where one of the huts opens towards another direction, such a hut is usually used as a guest room which has become a basic element of the house in about 15% of those examined.

The houses built in plots which accommodate two families, (i.e. two brothers or a man and his two co-wives) in a cubic mud or

red brick buildings are usually composed of two semi-independent parts, each consisting of a room and a verandah. The two parts may be connected front to back, or back to back, and located towards the rear section of the plot, thus leaving a large forecourt (Figs. 7.17 a and b and Plates 7.79 and 7.80).

The rooms of houses built in plots accommodating more than two elementary families, in a cubic mud or brick building, are usually arranged side by side, together with the verandah located in front of each room to form a row (Fig. 7.14, Plate 7.73, Fig. 7.10, Plate 7.63 and Plate 7.72). In some houses the long verandah is divided by short walls, thus allowing each room to be served by a separate verandah (Fig. 7.10, Plate 7.72, and Fig. 7.15 Plate 7.63). In a similar way to the second house type described above, the main building of the house is also placed towards the rear part of the plot, thus creating a large forecourt (Fig. 7.10, Plate 7.72).

This house type usually accommodates the co-wives of a man and their newly married daughters. It may also house the parents of the man and his sons. The families of the sons are, in this case, accommodated in the rooms located at the ends of the long building formed by the rooms of the house. Through this, a layout similar to that of the extended family house in the nomadic camps is attained, and an important tribal rule regarding residence arrangements - which requires that the households of the sons should encircle that of their father - is satisfied.⁽¹⁴⁾ The significance of this rule is indicated by the cases referred to above (Fig. 7.10, Plate 7.72 and

Fig. 7.14 and Plate 7.73), in which it has been achieved at the expense of important requirements of physiological comfort.

The courtyard of the three house types described above, whether it is located in the centre or the forefront of the plot, is the focus of the social life of the extended family. At its edges, the milking goats of the elementary families are tethered, and at its central part the children of the household play during the day under the supervision of their mothers who monitor them from the huts, sheds and verandahs nearby (Plates 7.81 and 7.82). During the day, the women of the household also meet in the courtyard where they help each other with outdoor housework (Plates 7.83 and 7.84). As they pursue this, the elderly women are able to monitor the young ones who usually spend the day and receive guests in the sheds and verandahs attached to their rooms (Plate 7.85). Thus we may conclude that the specific spatial relationship between the courtyard and other components of the house facilitates important forms of co-operation between the various families inhabiting such a house.

Towards the end of the day, an hour or so before sunset, the social life in the courtyard is enlivened as the men of the household return home from the town centre and grazing areas nearby, and join the women and children of the extended family over cups of tea (Plate 7.48). This family gathering is not interrupted for long even for the sunset prayers because the men usually do not perform prayers in the mosque, as is the common practice in housing areas inhabited by other Moslem ethnic groups. As they gather in the

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courtyard, members of the household entertain themselves in various ways, and similar to their practice in the nomadic lifestyle the milking of a goat can be a good reason for starting a dancing party and a competition of reciting tribal poetry. If the household is receiving a guest, close relatives living nearby may join in welcoming him. Besides such casual occasions, these close relatives also join the household in celebrating other ones - like the naming of babies. Thus we may conclude that the courtyard of the house is used in a similar way to the open area located in front of the tents of the extended family in the nomadic camps.

7.3.6 THE LEVEL OF INDIVIDUAL ROOMS: 'USUALLY ACCOMMODATING ELEMENTARY FAMILIES.

Despite the active social life existing in the courtyard of the house, individual elementary families living in the same plot also have their own social life which is centred within the rooms, sheds and verandahs allocated for each family. Within these spaces, and in line with the practice in the nomadic lifestyle, the female head of each elementary family is provided with the basic commodities, i.e. ~~milking~~ ~~goats~~, flour and firewood which secures the livelihood of the household and enables it to fulfil its social commitments, especially those regarding hospitality to guests. The goats are tethered in the courtyard together with those of the extended family, the firewood is kept in the section of the verandah or shed used by the elementary family and the flour and other food commodities are stored inside the room and near to the wall opposite the entrance which is the place most visible from

the courtyard of the house (Fig. 7.18 and Plates 7.86, and 7. 87). By keeping the basic commodities in these places, requirements of the needy families are satisfied without diminishing their sense of pride - which is highly regarded by this tribe⁽¹⁵⁾ because members of the extended family are able to monitor the resources of individual families and provide what they require before they ask for it.

The same spatial relations which enable members of the extended family to monitor the resources of the elementary families of the house, also make it possible for these members to supervise the women of elementary families especially during the absence of the men. This is made possible because the women usually spend the day and receive the guests of their households in the sheds, and sections of the verandah attached to the rooms allocated for each family, and thus can easily be supervised from the courtyard of the house. Supervision of the women is also made possible during the cold winter days when the guests are received inside the rooms, because according to the norms of the tribe the women entertain the guests while they sit on the floor mat located in the centre of the room and towards its entrance - and thus can be monitored from the courtyard of the house (Fig. 7.19 and Plates 7.88, 7.89 and 7.90).

The spatial relations described above ensure protection of the women of the extended family especially during the absence of the men, as in these urban housing areas such a family could be closely surrounded by distantly related families whom they may not trust.⁽¹⁶⁾ Adoption of this strategy, can be explained by the fact

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that, according to the norms of the tribe, monitoring of the women does not contradict the requirements of privacy which are satisfied through the traditional veil that is still worn by all the women and girls living in Mansoura and Mastura (Plates 7.83, 7.84 and 7.85). Thus we may conclude that the spatial relations linking the rooms inhabited by various elementary families and the courtyard of the house, ensures high levels of co-operation between members of the extended family without substantially diminishing the privacy of individual families.

7.3.7. THE LEVEL OF THINGS: THE OBJECTS WHICH ARE CONSIDERED AS IMPORTANT FOCI IN THE HOUSE.

Despite monitoring by members of the extended family, each of the elementary families living together is considered, to a great extent, to be an autonomous residential unit. This is indicated by the allocation of space, and provision of basic commodities, as described above. It is also indicated by the things and pieces of furniture used by these families and considered important foci around which their social life revolves - such as the wooden beds, floor mats, stoves, cabinets fitted with glass doors and used for displaying the family china, Samsonite (an expensive and famous make) suitcases, and prayer rugs bearing pictures of the holiest shrines of Islam in Saudi Arabia usually mounted on walls like posters (Plates 7.91 to 7.95).

The female head of the elementary family sits on the floor mat ^{room} located in her verandah and puts the stove, food and tea making

utensils in front of her, and from there she can watch the milking goats of the family tethered in the courtyard, use the firewood stacked beside her and reach out for the food stuff stored near the rear wall of the family room behind her (Fig. 7.19 and Plates 7.87, 7.89 and 7.92). Thus she is in control of the basic commodities that secure the livelihood of her household. When she keeps these commodities she does not do so out of selfishness or only for the benefit of her household, because she keeps them in such a way that permits members of the extended family to monitor, and have access to them, if need arises - in a similar way to the practice in the nomadic lifestyle. Through this, the livelihood of both the elementary and extended family is ensured.

The aspirations of the Rashaidaa traditional society go beyond acquiring and securing material commodities - such as food stuff and firewood - as aspects such as child rearing and the requirement of hospitality to guests are also considered important factors in determining the organization of space, as well as the things used within this space. Regarding child rearing, despite the fact that it is considered the responsibility of all members of the extended family, the parents are usually more closely involved in the up-bringing of their own children which for the most part takes place within the house of the elementary family. But, despite the close proximity between the family members there is a clear differentiation of sexes as they interact within the house. This is facilitated through the norms of the tribe regarding the use of furniture according to which the girls usually gather around their mother on the floor mat and the boys sit beside their father on the

bed⁽¹⁷⁾ (Plates 7.96 and 7.97). The Rashaidaa in Mansoura and Mastura still, to a great extent, observe these practices, despite the fact that the settled lifestyle here has enabled them to keep some chairs and more beds in their houses.

Observation of the norms regarding the use of furniture ensure the attachment of the boys to their father and the girls to their mother, and thus facilitate initiation of the children of the elementary family into adulthood. Yet, this does not mean detachment of the children of this family from the children of other families of the household, because all the children of the extended family meet and play together in the courtyard of the house (Plates 7.74, 7.81, and 7.86). Interaction of the children in this place at a very early age is important, because it nurtures the kind of relationship which leads to the most preferable matrimonial arrangement - the marriage of a man to the daughter of his father's brother⁽¹⁸⁾ - which usually takes place between children living within the same extended family. Such a relationship is then developed within the house of the elementary family. The open nature of these house types, and the arrangement of the pieces of furniture (beds and floor mats) near to each other, makes it acceptable for couples to meet freely and even court sometimes during the period of their informal engagement under the remote supervision of members of the extended family and close monitoring of the female heads of their elementary families (Plates 7.98 and 7.99).

The fact that the female heads of the elementary families spend the day in the verandahs located in the forefront of their

houses or on the floor mats spread near the entrance of their room enable them to spot guests approaching the house and thus hurry to compete with other households in offering them hospitality - according to the custom of the tribe. Satisfaction of this social commitment is made possible because these women have all the basic commodities needed for this purpose inside their house or nearby within their reach. On the other hand, receiving and entertaining the guests during the absence of the men is made acceptable by the tribe due to the open nature of the houses and the norms regarding the use of furniture which ensures relative segregation between the sexes during such semi-formal occasions.

The provision of the basic commodities and certain pieces of furniture inside the house of the elementary family, together with the open nature of this house, ensures protection of the women and allows the men to migrate abroad in order to secure the livelihood and prosperity of the household. The success of the migrating men is expressed in more than one way. It is clearly shown through the gold jewellery worn by the women who receive it as presents from their husbands and brothers.⁽¹⁹⁾ It is also shown through many objects brought from the rich Arab states which the settled life of the Rashaidaa in the town has permitted them to keep in their houses, i.e. expensive suitcases, thermosflasks, tape recorders and prayer rugs carrying pictures of the holiest shrines of Islam located in Saudi Arabia (Plates 7.91 to 7.95).

From the courtyard of the house, it is possible to see the cabinets and the objects displayed inside, and around, them (Fig. 7.19).

In this way, the cabinets record and are also indicators of the successful pursuit of the migrant men. Moreover, the prayer rugs also record and declare the Arabic descent of Rashaidaa that has facilitated this migration. Thus the display of these objects also have a symbolic meaning. In this respect, this is similar to the erection of the huge mosques in the public open spaces of the housing areas - referred to above-which are not built to satisfy actual demand, yet are seen as an important symbol of the strong ties that link the tribespeople with their brethren living across the Red Sea in the Arabian Peninsula.

7.3. THE URBAN LIFESTYLES AND RESPONSES OF THE BEJA AND RASHAIDAA TRIBES TOWARDS OFFICIAL POLICY AND PRACTICE: A COMPARISON.

The Beja and Rashaidaa communities living in the Banat south, the New Halanga and the Mastura housing areas, are provided with more or less similar standards and shapes for both private and public land uses. The house designs, which are required to be implemented according to the current rigid building regulations (referred to in Chapter One), are also similar. Even the mud and thatch hut, which are constructed by traditional builders from other tribes, are also built according to rigid standards. Yet, despite all this, the housing areas inhabited by these two tribes are developed and used for various kinds of land uses - public buildings, roads and housing plots - in a quite different way. This is mainly achieved through improvising and deviating from the prepared house designs, breaking the building regulations

controlling the development of both private and public space and using the same space and built forms in different ways. Such responses are clearly a means of maintaining the requirements of the social and cultural life characteristic of each of these two tribes.

Training of the boys and girls in order to develop skills in self defence, herding and handiwork - such as weaving of straw mats and tent woollen cloth - may not be a priority in the urban lifestyles of these Beja and Rashaidda communities because security is maintained through the police force, the economy is less dependent on animal husbandry and the people no longer live in tents. The role of this type of training is also diminished due to the official training of the children especially the boys - through their enrolment in schools. Yet, despite this, the responsibility of the family and the community in the up-bringing of the children, which involves an important process of socialization and acculturation becomes crucial, because it is considered a substantial means of preserving the culture of these two tribes, whose concern about their identity is manifest in their adherence to the native tongue (for the Beja), tribal costumes, and other cultural aspects such as the norms organizing the household type.

The protection of the girls and women, which is considered an important requirement of the nomadic lifestyle of these two Moslem tribes, becomes even more crucial here because a household may be surrounded by distantly related or unrelated tribespeople. As part of the urban life of these communities, their housing areas are exposed to strangers who may visit the area or just pass by. Despite

the well known suspicions of the Beja and Rashaidaa towards strangers and distantly related people (referred to in the previous chapter and Chapter Three), it has not been possible for them to control interaction with these categories through the strategies which they follow in a nomadic lifestyle. The Beja were not able to achieve this objective by settling at the edge of Kassala. Due to the expansion of the town these sites are later surrounded by areas inhabited by socially and ethnically dissimilar groups.

Despite the deeply ingrained suspicion of the Beja, and Rashaidaa towards strangers and the social distance separating the various sections and lineages of the two tribes, the inhabitants of the community areas dealt with here have to maintain links with all these categories. For example, according to the practice in the Sudan, the maintenance of informal links with the Government officials who control the provision of public services and the supply of basic commodities could be very crucial, as such services and commodities are in high demand by the Beja and Rashaidaa communities in Kassala. Moreover, maintenance of links with people from other sections of the tribe is also very important because this nurtures whatever kinds of co-operation exist within the tribe.

Hospitality to guests among traditional societies is not only motivated by economic drives and practical needs, but because such commitment may be highly regarded by the culture which regulates its fulfilment by means of certain social norms - as it is the case with the two tribal groups under consideration here. Thus, the Beja and Rashaidaa have to give special consideration to the reception of

guests in their urban neighbourhoods. Yet, this has to be accomplished in such a way that it is compatible with the requirements regarding the protection of the women and property.

Despite the high concern of both the Beja and Rashaidaa about the role of the community and family in child rearing, the protection of women and commitments to hospitality towards guests, communities from the two tribes living in urban areas seek satisfaction of these needs through different strategies. This has led to remarkable variations in development, organization and the use of dwelling space.

The accommodation of the boys of the Beja in urban neighbourhoods mainly takes place in communal residential places - Khalwas - located in public open spaces or at the edge of the housing area. The contribution of this type of residence to the process of socialization and acculturation is enhanced because these places are also used as guest houses for visiting close relatives and a social club for the neighbourhood unit. It is also enhanced because elderly men who are not allotted housing plots usually squat and live in the open space surrounding the Khalwa.

Besides the Khalwas, the Quranic schools located in the forefront of the housing areas also play an important role in the up-bringing of the boys, because they introduce them to their religion (Islam), teach them the basics of the Arabic language and contribute immensely in their disciplining from an early age. These schools also play another important educational and social role, as

the boys are indirectly taught the art of litigation mastered by the Beja - when they attend the session held there in which the senior man of the community area and its elderly people negotiate the settlement of disputes between residents of the area or with people from other areas. Interaction of the children, with these categories extend their social world and prepare them for their future role in the society.

We can conclude that in the urban lifestyle, in a similar way to the nomadic lifestyle, the Beja try to accommodate and keep their boys in public places rather than inside the houses. As a result of this, the whole community and especially the men contribute more in the up-bringing of the boys than the women. Detachment of the boys from their mothers, through accommodating and keeping them in public open spaces and at the edge of the housing areas, aims at integrating them into their community and preparing them from an early age to become responsible and courageous men. The latter objective here is more strongly linked to culture norms than to economic imperatives because urban lifestyle, unlike a nomadic pastoralist one, does not necessarily require such attributes.

The up-bringing of the girls of the Beja in urban areas, in a similar way to the practice in the nomadic lifestyle, is considered the responsibility of the elementary family which is usually those other than the parents of the girls. Widowed, or divorced kinswomen are always entrusted with this responsibility, who, in this case, live inside the housing plot of the parents or squat in an adjacent road if such a plot is not surrounded by a boundary wall. This

arrangement is compatible with the practice and attitude of the tribe towards the accommodation of these single women; which considers it unacceptable for them to apply for housing plots because this is regarded as an indicator that their community is unable to shelter them. Thus the proximity of the household of these women and that of the parents of the girls living with them ensures the appropriate atmosphere for rearing the girls as well as, the protection and service of the women looking after them.

The house design and social life of the Rashaidaa in urban areas indicate that child rearing is still, according to the norms of the tribe, considered mainly the responsibility of the elementary, as well as extended family. The substantial role of the elementary family is demonstrated by the allocation and organization of space and furniture and the provision of basic commodities which aims to ensure the accommodation of the children within the household of their parents. The responsibility and demand for the contribution of the extended family in this process is indicated by certain house forms in common use in urban areas in which the elementary families of the household reside around, or along, a common courtyard. This is also indicated by certain other design measures - such as abolition of the boundary walls required by the building regulations and building the house on the boundary wall and opening its window onto the adjacent plot. The adoption of such built forms enables members of the extended family to monitor and, directly or indirectly, contribute in the up-bringing of the children of the household.

The substantial contribution of the family in child rearing and the focusing of the social life of the young people inside housing plots can be inferred from the small role of communal institutions and places associated with such social demands and activities such as mosques, public open spaces and areas around corner shops. This could also be deduced from the underutilization, underdevelopment and negligible community contribution to the maintenance of such places.

The protection of the women of the Beja in urban areas is mainly achieved through the segregation of sexes; a strategy which has consequently led to the creation of communal places used for accommodating the young and unmarried men and receiving the guests. This measure contributes in another way to the protection of the women, as these communal places are usually located in the open spaces in front of the houses, and at the edges and in the forefront of the housing areas where they form a strong line of defence.

Besides the creation of these places, the protection of the women and maintenance of their privacy is also ensured through other environmental elements and design measures. The importance of the boundary walls in accomplishing this objective is indicated by the fact that they are considered a top priority; as demonstrated by many cases where the funds allocated for the house are spent on this wall (Plates 7.100 and 7.101), or other cases where the boundary wall is built of permanent materials (mud) and the rooms of the house are constructed of straw mats (Plates 7.102 and 7.103). The importance of the boundary wall is also indicated by the cases where, due to the

shortage of funds, the people use every available material for its construction, i.e. scrap metal, rags (Plates 7.23 to 7.25).

The protection of the women and the maintenance of their privacy is also ensured through locating enclosed sheds in front of their rooms, especially in the cases where the plot is not surrounded by a boundary wall. The layout of the furniture inside the room also contributes towards achieving this objective. The bed is located in the inner most part of the room which enjoys the maximum level of privacy.

The planning, ²design and furniture layout characteristic of the Beja urban housing areas reflects the great concern of the Beja for the protection of the women. This is ensured through segregation of the sexes and the accommodation of the men in places which form a protective ring around the domains of the women. The importance of this segregation is demonstrated by the symbolic act of burying the afterbirth of the baby boys at the edge of housing areas and that of the baby girls inside housing plots which is still practiced as part of the urban lifestyle. With their protection ensured through all these measures the women feel secure enough to move around inside their houses clad with just a single length of brightly coloured silk cloth - the tribal costume - which covers their heavily anointed bodies and reveals their femininity in the appropriate place and for a restricted category of men such as their father, husband and sons - in satisfaction of certain requirements of the Islamic religion.

The same spatial relations that enable members of the extended family to contribute to rearing the children of the Rashaidaa household, by permitting visual contact and direct access between houses accommodating the family, also make it possible for these members to supervise and protect the women of the family. Yet employing the same strategy used for protecting the women in the nomadic lifestyle may not be feasible in this urban situation, because the houses here, unlike the tents, cannot be flexibly opened and closed according to the requirements of privacy and supervision.

Within her fairly open house, if a woman intends to do a task which requires removing her face mask, she has to move to a part of the house or verandah where she cannot be seen by men other than her father, husband or sons. As soon as a guest approaches the house she has to cover her face and hurry to welcome him. When she entertains the guest she has to sit on a floor mat located in a place in her verandah or room, which can be seen by members of the extended family living around, while the guest sits in a different place and level on the bed nearby. Thus, the protection and privacy of the women is maintained here through the use of the veil, norms regarding the use of furniture, and the location of the pieces of furniture in relation to the doors and windows of the house.

The limited role of the boundary walls and entrance gates in controlling visual contact and accessibility to the Rashaidaa houses should not be regarded as a lack of concern about protection of the women, as on the contrary it enables the whole community to contribute in an indirect way in this process. Regarding the

fulfilment of this objective, we can conclude that the tribe relies more on social values, norms and the traditional system of sanctions, than on physical boundaries. The emphasis on good neighbourliness - which is gauged by the degree of trustworthiness between neighbours, especially with regard to the women of the household, could be considered one of the measures aimed to protect the women. The demand of trustworthiness from men - like paid herders whose work involves entering the house of many people and interacting with their women which is a common practice in urban areas - could also be regarded as another measure. ^{It is important to consider the above mentioned design measures together} (In order to conceive them) together with the system of sanctions which socially distances a wrongdoer from his community⁽²⁰⁾ - a harsh punishment for a person in this socially cohesive society.

As the judgement of the behaviour of the people and imposition of these sanctions theoretically involves all members of the community, then it is necessary to give these members a chance to observe what is happening inside housing plots; and this may explain the small degree of concern about using boundary walls as a means of controlling visual contact. The important role of the extended family and the whole community in protecting the women, could also explain why the Rashaidaa do not accept being housed as elementary families in ethnically heterogeneous housing areas. In some cases where this has been accepted, the men have had to marry women from other tribes, because their Rashaidaa wives would not accompany them.⁽²¹⁾

The suspicion of the Beja towards strangers and their keen

desire to keep the guests distanced from their women is demonstrated by the system of filters which they use to control interaction with these categories. The remoteness of the sites of their housing areas voluntarily chosen by the tribe at the edges of towns, considered together with the various techniques of deception aimed to thwart strangers intending to visit their areas (that has ~~often~~ impeded our field study), could be regarded as one of the important measures for controlling interaction. Strangers who manage to cross these barriers will still be kept at bay through another control point as they are usually received in shelters located in the forefront of the housing areas.

The reception of the strangers in these shelters also enables them to cross another barrier - that of language - because as guests are received there, they have the chance to meet members of the community who can communicate in Arabic, which is not widely spoken and understood among members of this tribe. On the other hand, this arrangement also enables the tribe to retain its language - an important symbol of its identity - and yet to be able to communicate with the outside world through representatives of the community. This system of representation also strengthens the position of the community in any dispute discussed with the visiting strangers, as these representatives usually handle the matter together as a panel and are thus more able to practice the art of litigation mastered by members of this tribe. (22)

Visiting close relatives who are received inside housing areas are also kept away from the women, as they are usually

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entertained and accommodated in public places - such as the Khalwas and areas around corner shops - rather than in private houses. This arrangement also helps to introduce the boys of the community who live in these communal places to their visiting kinsmen.

Interaction between the guests received and accommodated in communal places and the women living inside the housing plots is controlled through the high walls which surround the plots and the fences which demark their boundaries. It is also controlled through social norms regulating use of dwellings. Observation of these norms is important because the men of the community are able to monitor life inside housing areas from the public places around which they loiter during the day.

In their urban lifestyle the Rashaidaa do not receive and accommodate the guests in communal places and usually do not offer them hospitality in public places like coffee houses because they consider one's house to be the appropriate place for meeting such a commitment. To satisfy this, many households have provided proper guest rooms within their houses. In houses where such a room is not provided guests are received in the multi-purpose room which is also used as a bedroom, and commitments towards guests are met in this room even during the absence of the men of the household.

During the absence of the men, the women of the household who receive and entertain the guests in this case feel secure to do so, because the design of the house and the layout of the furniture make it possible for members of the extended family living around to

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monitor and protect her if the need arises. This demonstrates the ability of traditional societies, to organize space in order to satisfy certain requirements which may appear contradictory - such as the protection of the women and the reception and entertainment of strangers by the women of the household in a private part of the house - in a simple and unified manner.

The fact that the Rashaidaa receive strangers inside their houses rather than in public places shows the lack of any significant socio-political entities other than the extended and elementary families. The accommodation of visiting kinsmen in the same manner shows that households living together in urban housing areas are not linked by strong social links. Judging by the responses of the inhabitants towards strangers, we can conclude that the urban social life is centred around individual households and not the whole community, and in this respect can be considered contrary to that of the Beja.

The focusing of social life of the Rashaidaa inside the houses is also explained by the fact that child rearing and the protection of the women is mainly regarded as the responsibility of the family. In this respect the Beja also differ from the Rashaidaa, because the whole community is considered responsible for satisfying these social demands, and this consequently shifts the focus of social life, especially that of the men, from housing plots to communal places. Judging by the strategies adopted by the two tribes to meet the basic demands of social life discussed above, it becomes clear that their requirement and use of both private and public space

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differs remarkably. The imbalanced way in which they utilize dwelling space here is, to a great extent, similar to that characteristic of their nomadic housing environments despite the substantial differences in circumstances between the urban and nomadic lifestyles.

The variation between the two tribes goes beyond the level of utilization of private and public space as it also involves the organization of this space throughout the various levels of dwelling environment. Such differences can be linked to variations in the social and cultural system characteristic of each tribe. Despite the fact that these two tribes may be using different environmental elements, or organizing space in a different manner from that characteristic of their nomadic housing environment, yet we can conclude that space is generally used to satisfy the same requirements demanded by the social and cultural life of each tribe. X

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9. Ibid. p.82.
10. YOUNG, W.C. "Ritual and Residence among the Rashayda Bedouins". The 79th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington D.C., December 1980, p.6.
11. The low attendance of the Rashaidaa at mosques could be linked to their poor knowledge about the religious benefits of collective prayers in specific terms, and the Islamic religion in general terms. This is supported by YOUNG, W.C., "Heterodoxy and Reform among the Rashayda Bedouin". Commission on Nomadic People, International Union of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, April 1984, p.35.
12. As referred to in YOUNG, W.C., "The Effect of Labour Migration on Relations of Exchange and Subordination among the Rashayda Bedouin of the Sudan" in 'Research in Economic Anthropology', Vol. 9, 1987, p.194, members of the same extended family organize migration for work abroad between them on a rotational basis. According to this, those remaining behind

inside the country look after and protect the family and property of the migrating men.

13. For more details about the climate of Kassala refer to BARBOUR, op. cit., pp.38-46.
14. YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence among the Rashayda Bedouin", op. cit., p.2.
15. Out of self pride, the Rashaidaa men do not like to ask or receive help and food from other tribespeople. This attribute of the tribe is referred to in YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence among the Rashayda Bedouin", op. cit., p.4.
16. For example, in Mastura households from the various lineages of the Baraasa branch of the tribe were housed side by side.
17. YOUNG, W.C., "Veiling as an Organizer of Residence Structure and Space in a Rashiidy camp". Presented at the panel: Marriage, the Veil, and Gender in the Muslim World at the 80th Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Los Angeles, December 1981, pp.1-2.
18. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.132.
19. The Rashaidaa migrant men spend most of the revenue gained from their migration on buying jewellery for their wives, sisters and mothers. This is referred to in DIRWISH, op. cit., p.47; YOUNG, "The Effect of Labour Migration ...", op. cit. p.212; and GRISELDA EL-TAYEB, "An Illustrated Record of Sudanese National Costumes". M.A. Dissertation, University of Khartoum, 1976, pp.103-104.
20. As a means of socially distancing a wrongdoer from their community, the Rashaidaa do not invite such a person to social and family occasions such as the naming ceremonies. This is

referred to in YOUNG, "Ritual and Residence among the Rashayda

Bedouin", op. cit., p.4.

21. DIRWISH, op. cit., p.50.

22. PAUL, op. cit., pp.4-5.

FIGURES

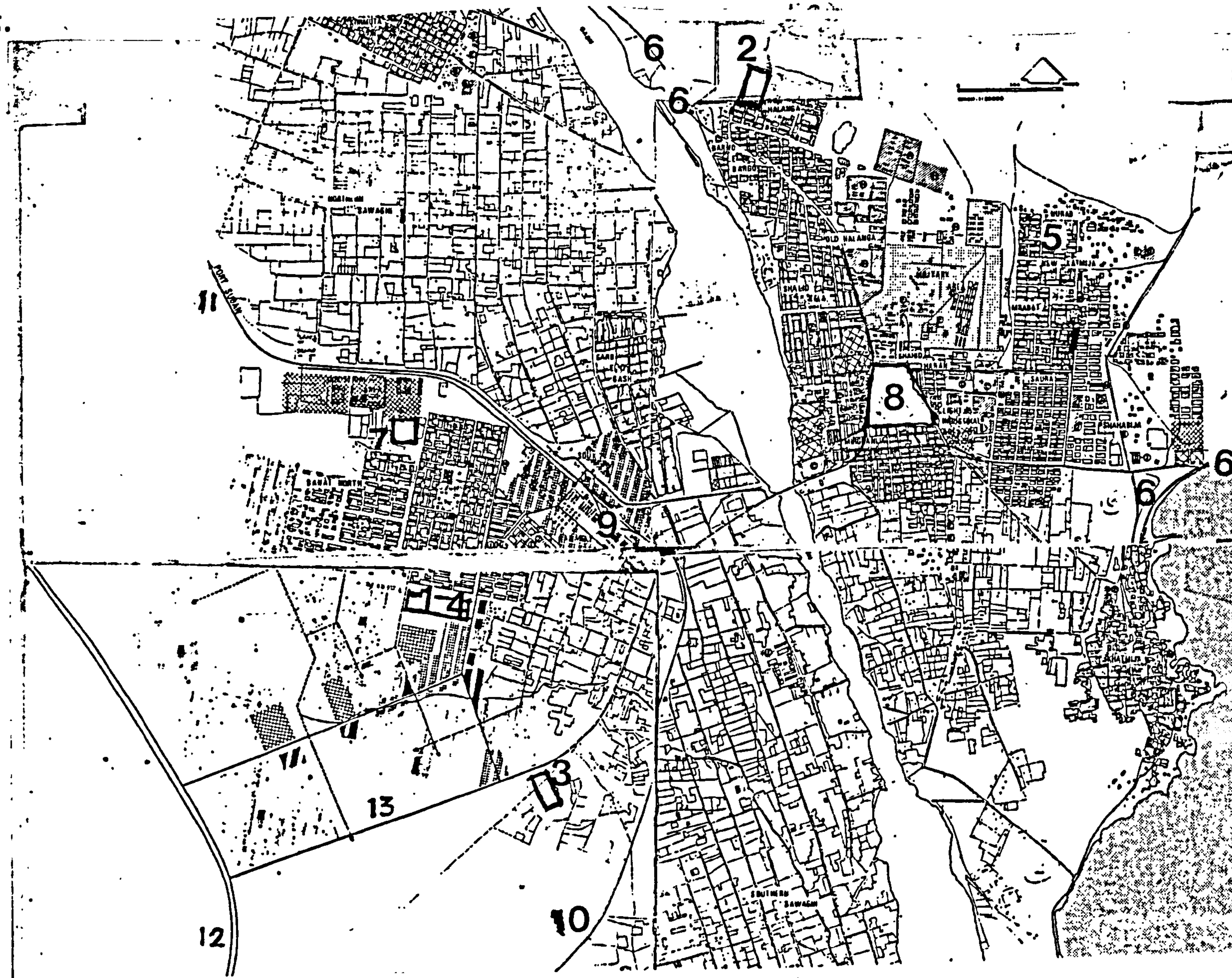


Fig. 7.1. THE OFFICIALLY PLANNED AND ILLEGAL HOUSING AREAS IN KASSALA WHICH ARE INHABITED BY THE BEJA AND RASHAIDAA GROUPS REFERRED TO IN THE CHAPTER.
(Scale approximately 1:100,000)

KEY:

- 1- The location of Banat south housing scheme.
- 2- The location of the New Halanga housing scheme.
- 3- The location of Mastura housing scheme.
- 4- The location of Mansoura within Banat south.
- 5- The Norab housing areas.

- 6- The illegal housing areas inhabited by Beja and Hadendowa.
- 7- The illegal housing area where the Gazaiza Rashaidaa live.
- 8- The town centre.
- 9- The railway station.
- 10- The railway line linking Kassala to Khartoum.
- 11- The railway line linking Kassala to Port Sudan.
- 12- The Khartoum-Port Sudan motorway.
- 13- The asphalt road linking Kassala to Khartoum-Port Sudan motorway.

(Source: based on a land use map prepared by the Dutch Aid Organization during the mid 1970's).

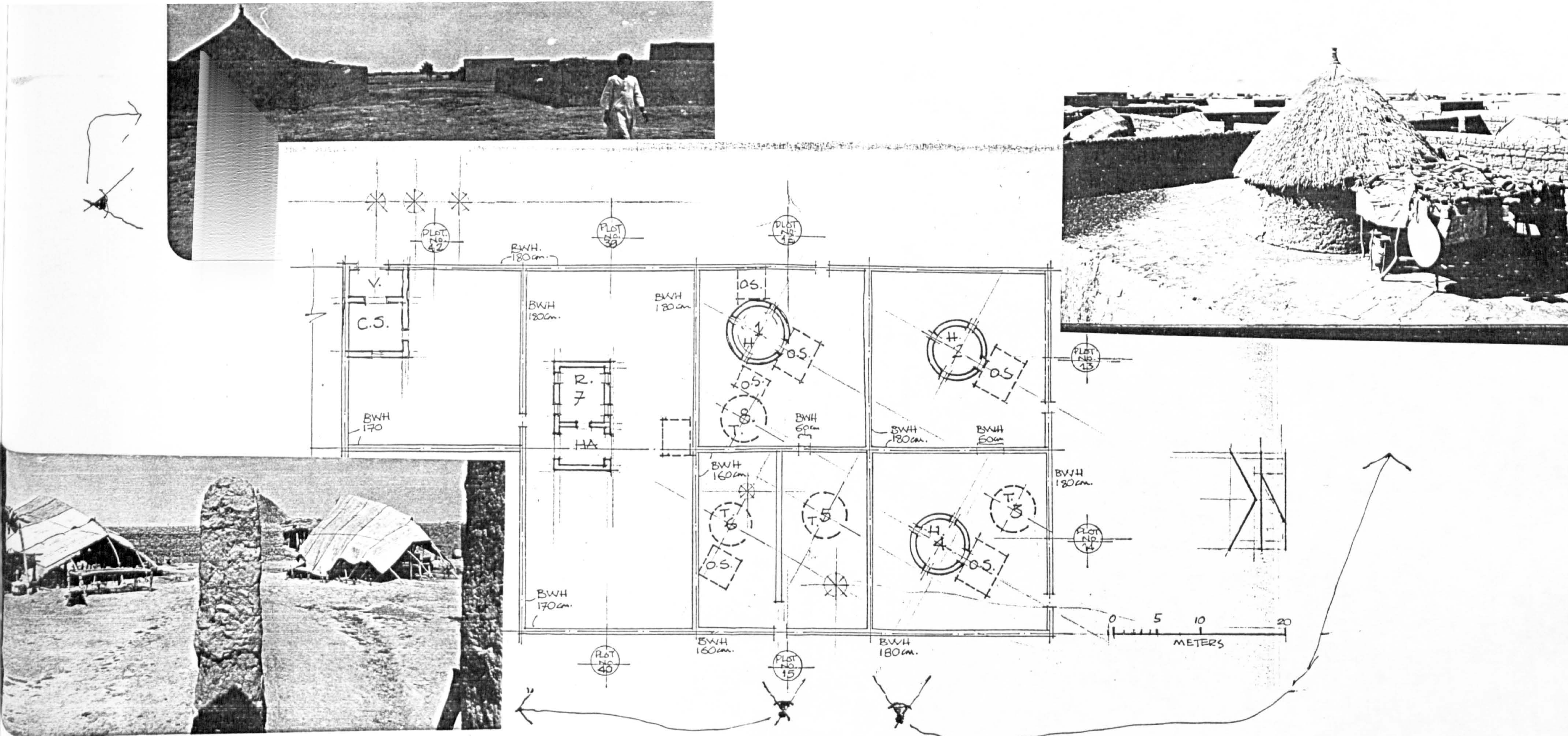


Fig. 7.2. THE BEJA HOUSEHOLDS INHABITING ONE OF THE HOUSING BLOCKS IN BLOCK 33 BANAT SOUTH.

KEY:

- T. Tent.
- H. Hut.
- R. Room.
- HA. Hall.
- O.S. Open shed.
- BWH. Boundary wall height.
- C.S. Corner shop.
- V. Verandah.

The people living inside and around the housing block:

Plot no. 13 - Abu Ali Mahmoud, his wife and small children.

Plot no. 14 - Adam Obied, his wife and grown-up and small children. Adam's grown-up daughter is accommodated in the tent of the widow of Adam's first cousin squatting in the road located to the north of the housing plot.

The tent set up in the road located to the north of plot 14 - Inhabited by the widow of Adam Obied's first cousin.

Plot no. 15 - The northern part of the plot is inhabited by Oushik Adam, his wife and small children. The southern part of the plot is inhabited by Abu Isa Adam, his wife and their small children.

Plot no. 16 - The hut is inhabited by Oshiek Obied Adam, his wife and their small children. The tent is inhabited by the aunt of Oshiek's wife. The grown up daughter of Oshiek is also accommodated in this hut. The partly enclosed shed is inhabited by Oshiek's mother.

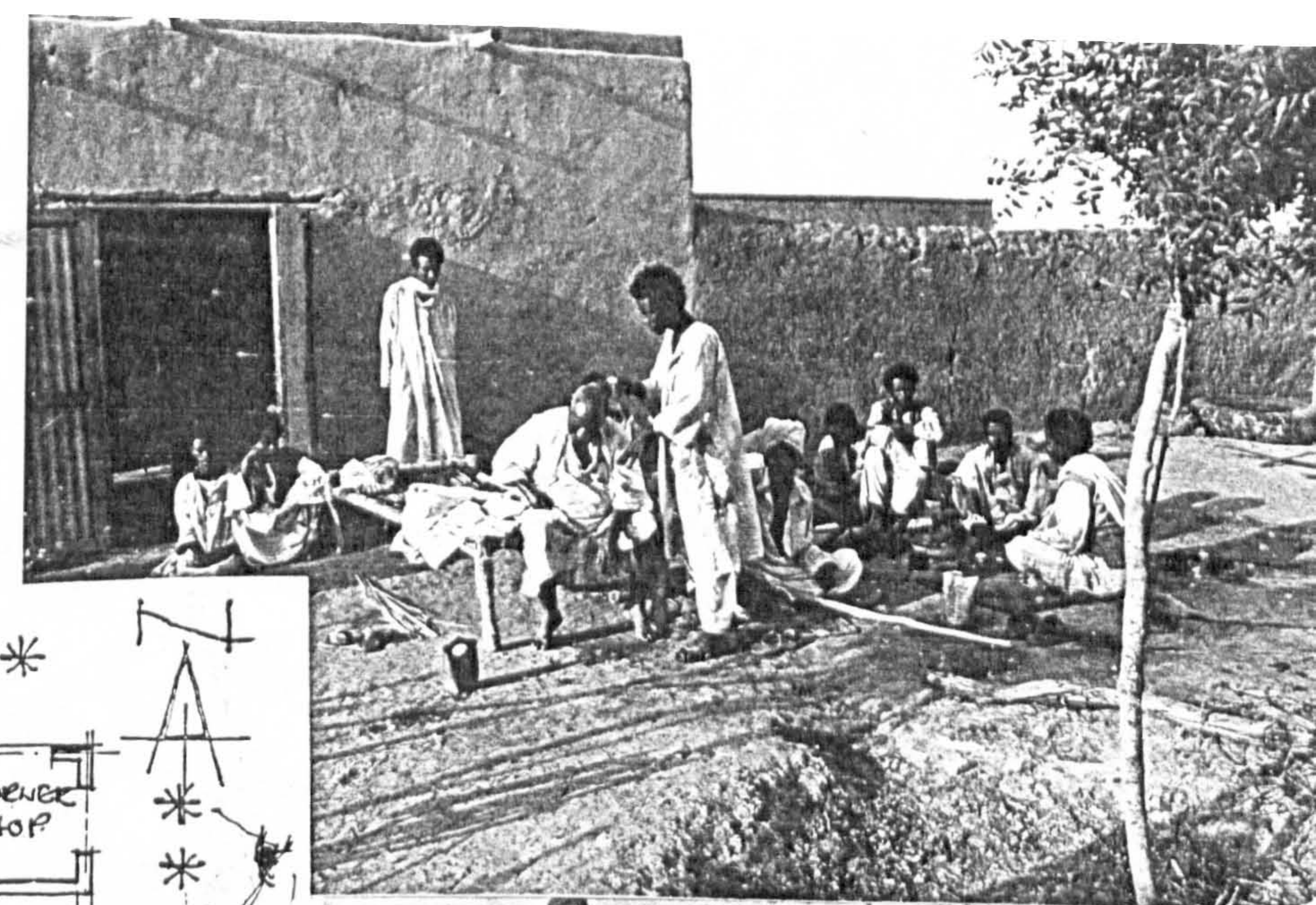
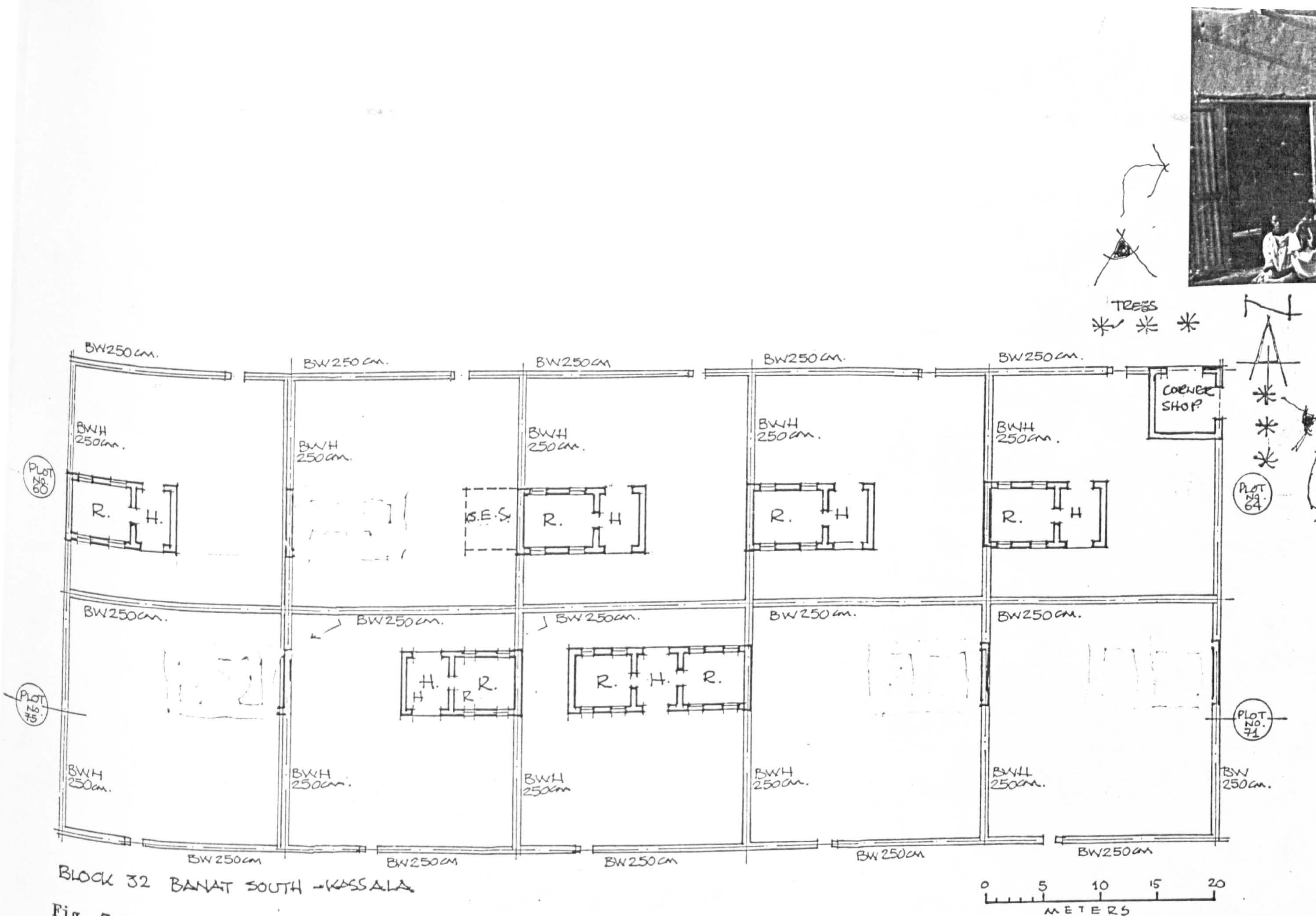
Plots no. 39 and 40 - are inhabited by Sid Ahmed Al-Khalifa, his wife and their small children.

Note: The men living in the housing block meet and entertain their guests in the shaded area located in front of the corner shop.

The social relations linking some of the female heads of the households living in and around the housing block:

Abu Ali-Adam Badi: first cousin; Adam Badi-Oshiek Adam: father-son; Oshiek Obied-Oshiek Adam: father-in-law-son-in-law; Abu Ali-Abu Isa: father-in-law-son-in-law.

(Source: the author)



Block 32 BANAT SOUTH - KASSALA

Fig. 7.3. THE BEJA HOUSEHOLDS INHABITING A HOUSING BLOCK IN BLOCK 32 BANAT SOUTH.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- H. Hall.
- S.E.S. Semi-enclosed shed.
- BWH. Boundary wall height.

The people who are allotted and inhabit plots in the housing block:

- Plot 60 - Allotted to and inhabited by Ohaj Ahmed, his wife and their small children.
- Plot 61 - Allotted to Hassan Au Fatana (a poor man). He lives there with his wife and small children.
- Plot 62 - Allotted to and inhabited by Mohamed Ahmed Mohamed and his wife.
- Plot 63 - Allotted to and inhabited by Abdalla Ahmed Mohamed and his wife.
- Plot 64 - Allotted to and inhabited by Abu Fatana Ahmed Mohamed, his wife and their small children.
- Plot 71 - The plot is allotted to Mohamed Ahmed Abdalla. The plot has not been built but is surrounded by a boundary wall and an entrance gate.

- Plot 72 - Allotted to Siedna Ohaj Ahmed. The plot has not been built and is not inhabited but is surrounded by a boundary wall and a gate.
- Plot 73 - Allotted to and inhabited by Oshiek Ohaj Ahmed, his wife and their small children. The extra room is used by the father sometimes.
- Plot 74 - Allotted to and inhabited by Adam Ahmed Mohamed, his wife and their small children.
- Plot 75 - Allotted to Omar Mohamed Saeed. The plot has not been built and is not inhabited but is surrounded by a boundary wall and a gate.

Note: The men living in the block meet and entertain their guests in the shaded area located around the corner shop.

The social relationship linking some of the femal heads of the households living in the block:

Ohaj Ahmed-Hassan Abu Fatana: first cousins; Mohamed Ahmed-Abdalla Ahmed-Abu Fatana Ahmed: brothers; Siedana Ohaj-Oshiek Ohaj: brothers; Abdalla Ahmed-Siedana Ohaj: Uncle-nephew; Mohamed Ahmed-Oshiek Ohaj: Uncle-nephew.

(Source: the author)

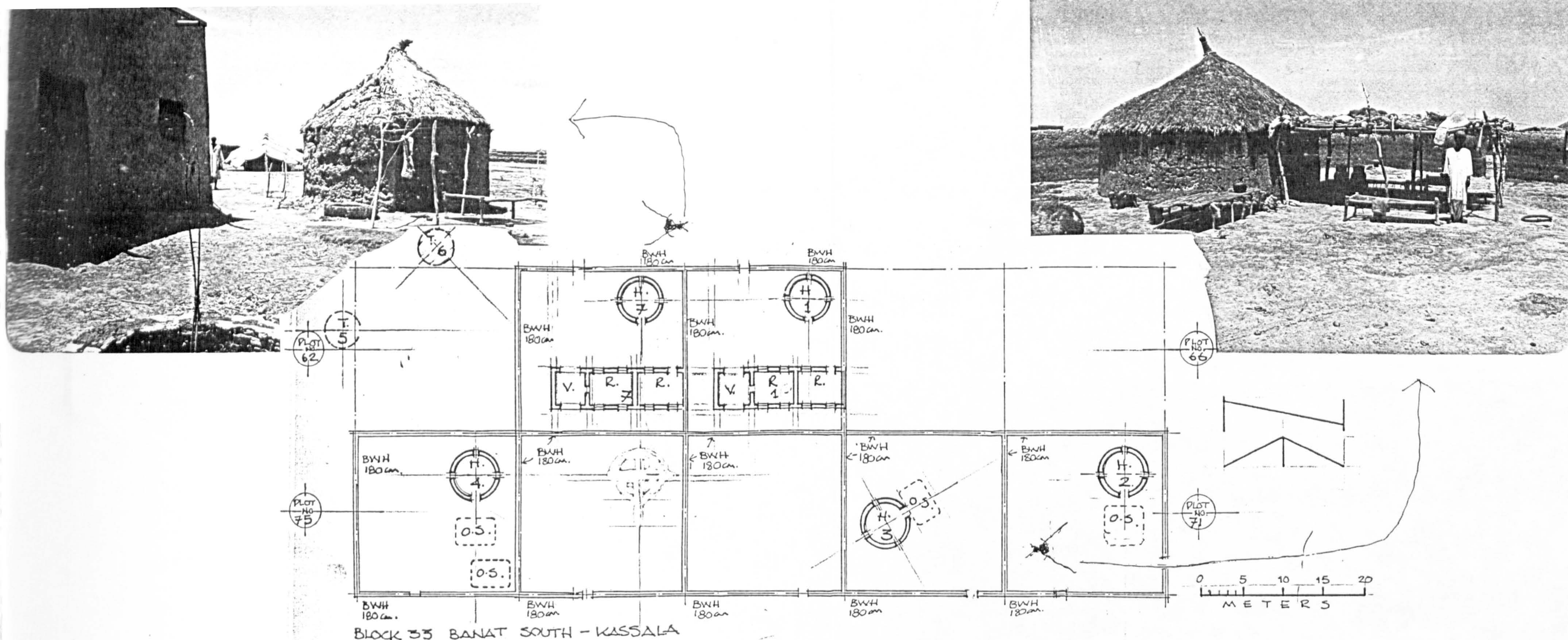


Fig. 7.4. THE BEJA HOUSEHOLDS INHABITING ONE OF THE HOUSING BLOCKS IN BLOCK 33 BANAT SOUTH.

KEY:

- H. Hut.
- V. Verandah.
- R. Room.
- T. Tent.
- O.S. Open shed.
- BWH. Boundary wall height.

The people inhabiting and living around the housing block:

Plot 62 - Vacant.

The tent set up on the road located to the north of plot 62 - Inhabited by the mother of Siedna Mohamed Osman who live in plot 75.

The tent set up on the road located to the west of plot 62 - Inhabited by Siedna Bakash Abu Ali who has recently married the daughter of Siedna Mohamed Osman.

Plot 63 - Allotted to and is inhabited by Nagm El-Dean Mohamed Tahir, his wife and their small children.

Plot 64 - Allotted to and is inhabited by Ohaj Mohamed Tahir, his wife and their small children.

Plot 65 - Vacant.

Plot 66 - Vacant.

Plot 71 - Allotted to and is inhabited by Al-Hassan Abdalla Mahmoud, his wife and their small children.

Plot 72 - Allotted to and is inhabited by Ohaj Ahmed Mohamed Dean, his wife and their small children.

Plot 73 - Has not been built but is surrounded by a boundary wall and a gate.

Plot 74 - Has not been built but is surrounded by a boundary wall and a gate.

Plot 75 - Allotted to and is inhabited by Siedna Ahmed Osma, his wife and their grown-up and small children. While the grown-up sons sleep in the semi-enclosed shed located in the corner of the house, the grown-up daughter sleeps with her grandmother who squats in the road nearby the housing plot (T.6).

The social relationship linking some of the household heads living in and around the housing block:

Siedna Mohamed Osman-Siedna Bakash; father-in-law-son-in-law; the woman owning tent (T.6)-Siedna Mohamed Osman: mother-son; Nagm El-Dean Mohamed Tahir-Ohaj Mohamed Tahir: brothers; Al-Hassan Abdalla Mahmoud-Ohaj Ahmed Mohamed: first cousins.

(Source: the author)

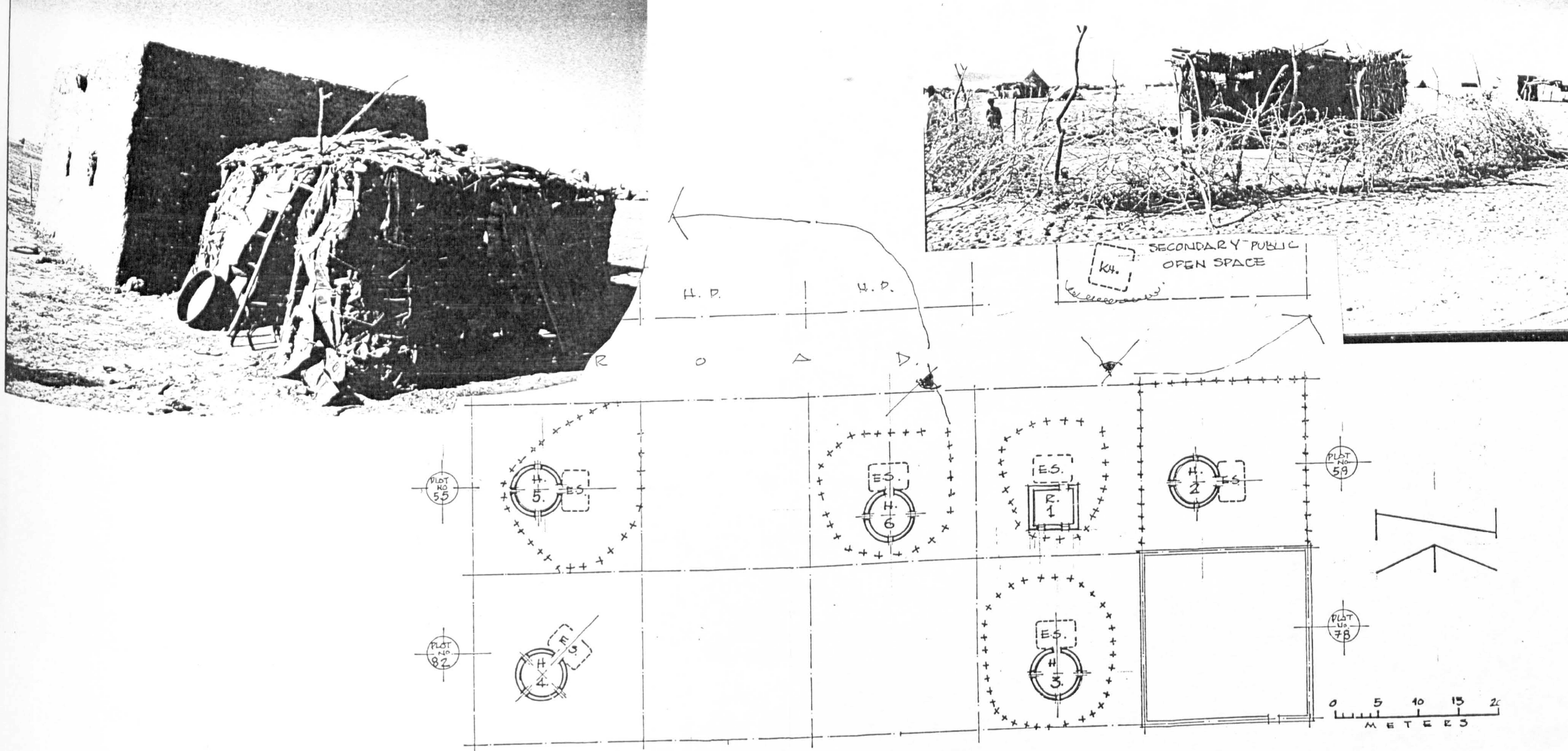


Fig. 7.5. THE BEJA HOUSEHOLDS INHABITING A HOUSING BLOCK IN BLOCK 32 BANAT SOUTH.

KEY:

- H. Hut.
- R. Room.
- E.s. Enclosed shed.
- Kh. Khalwa used for informal education of children and the accommodation of young men and guests.

The people living in the housing block:

- Plot 55 - Allotted to and inhabited by Eiman Jaffar Abu Jaffar, his wife and their small children.
- Plot 56 - Vacant.
- Plot 57 - Allotted to, and inhabited by, Abu Mohamed Mohamed Thabout, his wife, their grown-up sons and small children. The grown-up sons sleep in the Khalwa located in the nearby secondary public open space. The built-up part of the plot is surrounded by closely spaced tree branches (about 40 cm. apart).
- Plot 58 - Allotted to Omer Mohamed Imam who lives in it with his wife and small children.

Plot 59 - Allotted to Al-Shiekh Mohamed Imam who lives in it with his wife, son (20 years old) and daughter (6 years old). The son sleeps in the Khalwa located in the nearby public open space.

Plot 78 - The plot has not been built but is surrounded by a mud boundary wall and a gate.

Plot 79 - Allotted to Mohamed Abdalla Thabout who lives in it with his wife and small children. The built up part of the plot is surrounded by a fence similar to that of plot 57.

Plots 80 and 81 - are vacant and not developed.

Plot 82 - Owned and inhabited by the widow of Jaffar Mohamed Thabout (60 years old) who lives in it alone.

The social relationships linking some of the heads of the households inhabiting the housing block:

Omer Mohamed Imam-Al-Shiekh Mohamed Imam: brothers; Mohamed Abdalla Thabout - The widow living in plot 82: brother-in-law-sister-in-law; Abu Mohamed Thabout-Mohamed Abdalla Thabout: first cousins.

(Source: the author)

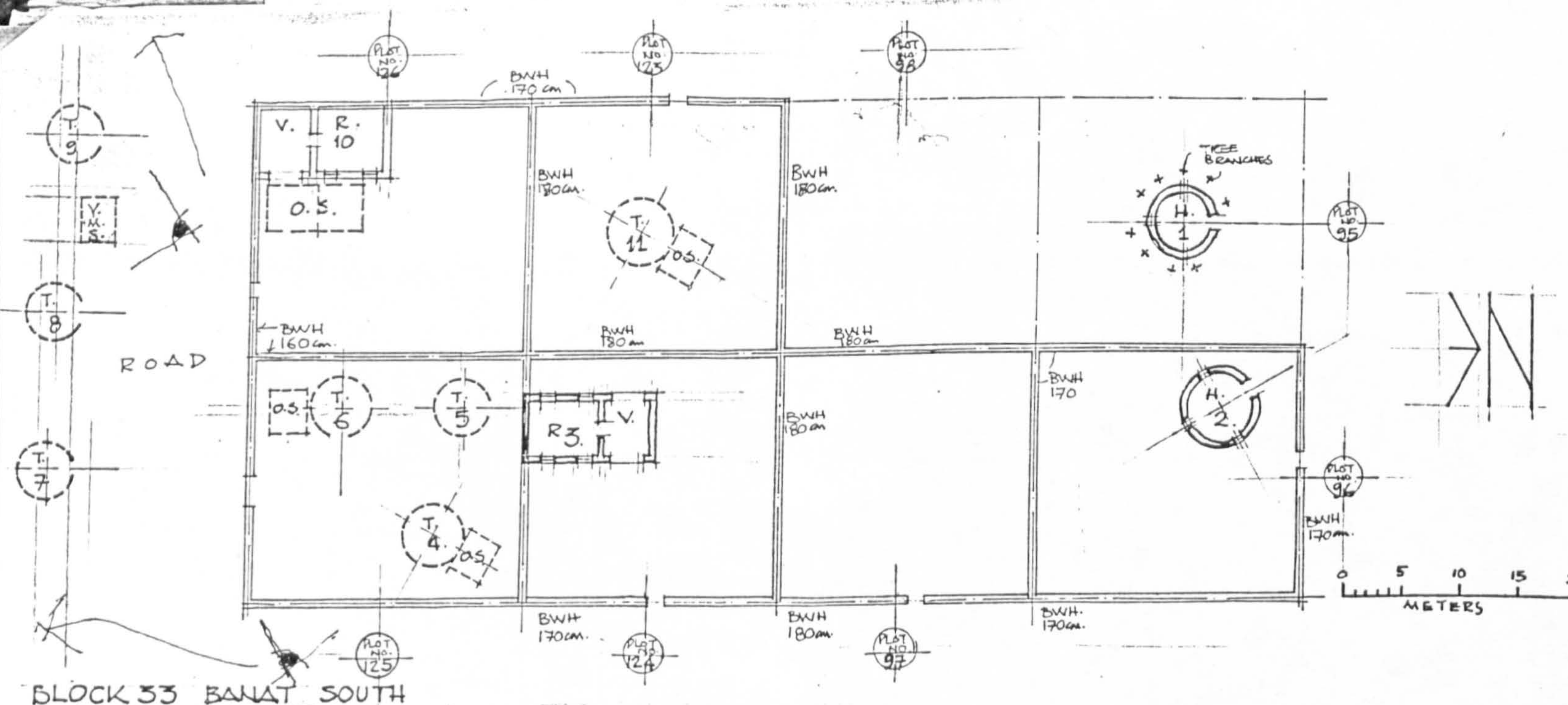
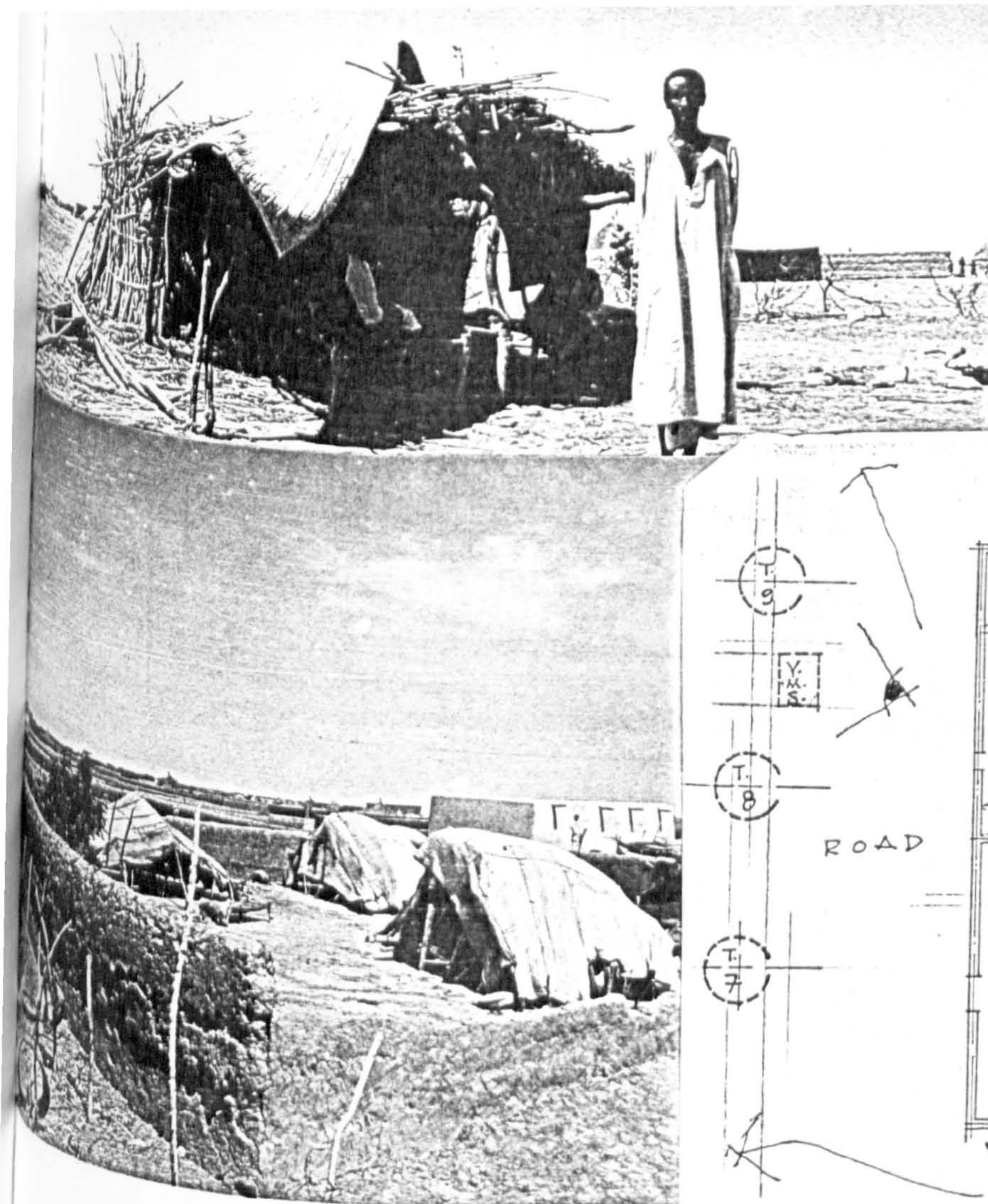


Fig. 7.6. THE PLAN OF A PARTIALLY DEVELOPED HOUSING BLOCK IN THE PART OF BANAT SOUTH INHABITED BY AMARRAR BEJA HOUSEHOLDS.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- V. Verandah.
- H. Hut.
- T. Tent.
- O.S. Open shed.
- Y.M.S. The shelter where the young men spend the day and sleep at night.

The people living in and around the housing block:

- Plot 95 - Allotted to Al-Khalifa Ahmed Osman but is inhabited by his grown-up sons and those of his closely related families who live nearby. The plot is not surrounded by a boundary wall but the hut in which the young men live is encircled by a fence made of closely spaced tree branches.
- Plot 96 - Allotted to Al-Khalifa Ahmed Osman in which he lives with his wife and small children.
- Plot 97 - A vacant plot which has not been built but is surrounded by a mud boundary wall. The house has not been finished because the funds allocated for this purpose were spent on constructing the boundary wall.
- Plot 98 - Vacant.
- Plot 123 - Owned and inhabited by a widow (the sister of Oshiekh Omer who lives in plot 125) and her five daughters the eldest of whom is 14 years old.

- Plot 124 - Allotted to Okair Al-Khalifa Ahmed who lives in it with his wife and small children. His grown-up sons stay in the hut built in plot 95.
- Plot 125 - Allotted to Oshiek Omer who lives in it with his elementary family and those of his married son and son-in-law. Oshiek lives with his wife and small children in tent T.4. His unmarried grown-up sons stay in the young men's shelter built at the side of the road to the south of the housing block. Oshiek's married son - Ali - lives with his wife and small children in tent T.5. Tent T.6 is inhabited by Onour Mohamed (Oshiek's son-in-law) and his wife.
- Tent T.7 (built at the road side) - Inhabited by Omer Onour Mohamed, his wife and small children.
- Tent T.8 (built at the road side) - Inhabited by a widow (the sister of Oshiek) who lives in it alone.
- Tent T.9 (built at the road side) - Inhabited by Adam Omer, his wife and their small children.
- Plot 126 - Under construction. The boundary wall is built but the main building of the house is unfinished. The plot is allotted to Omer Oshiek.

The social relationships linking the family heads of the households living inside and around the housing block:

Al-Khalifa Ahmed Osman-Okair Al-Khalifa: father-son; Oshiek Omer-Omer Oshiek: fathers-son; the widow living in Plot 123-Omer Oshiek: aunt-nephew.

(Source: the author)

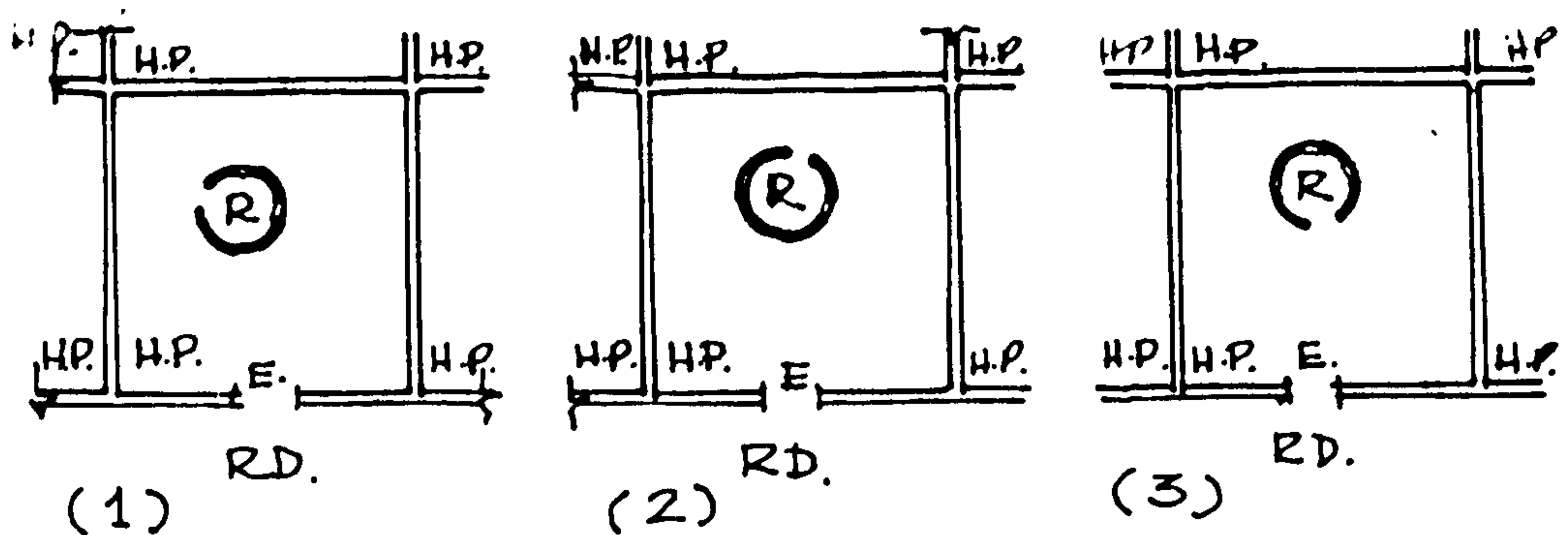


Fig. 7.7 SOME OF THE DESIGN MEASURES THROUGH WHICH THE BEJA CONTROL INTERACTION BETWEEN THE PRIVATE LIFE INSIDE THE ROOM OF THEIR HOUSES AND THE PUBLIC LIFE TAKING PLACE IN THE ROADS.
(Not to scale)

KEY:

H.P. Housing plot.

RD. Road.

R. Room.

E.G. Entrance gate.

(1) and (2) Limited interaction between the private life in the rooms and the public life in the roads.

(3) High levels on interaction between the private and public life.

(Source: the author)

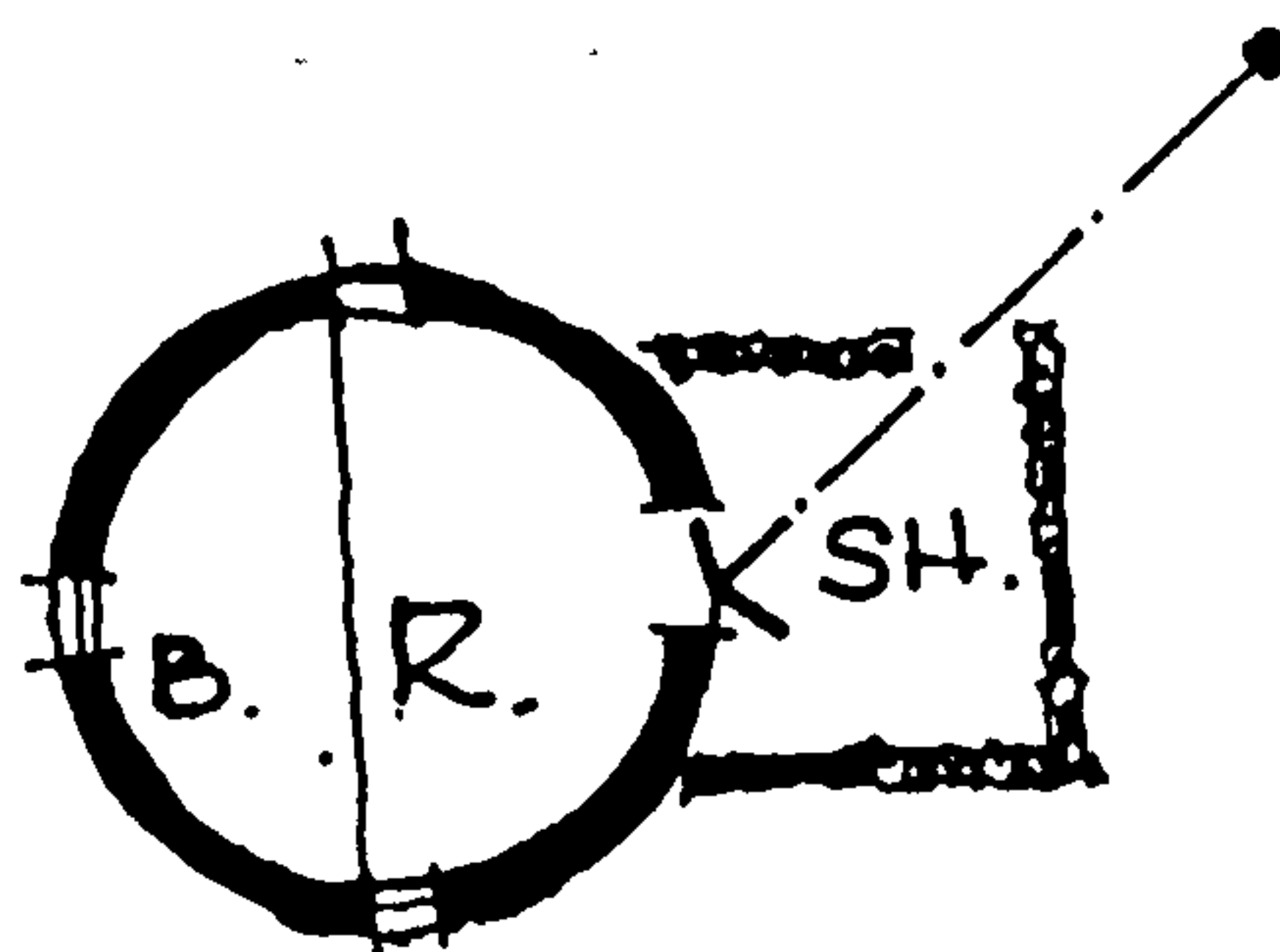


Fig. 7.8. IN ORDER TO ENSURE HIGH LEVELS OF PRIVACY INSIDE THE ROOM OF THEIR HOUSE, THE BEJA ARRANGE THE DOOR OF SUCH A ROOM AT RIGHT ANGLES TO THAT OF THE SHED BUILT IN FRONT OF IT.
(Not to scale)

KEY:

R. Room.

SH. Enclosed shed.

B. Bed.

Line of vision.

(Source: the author)

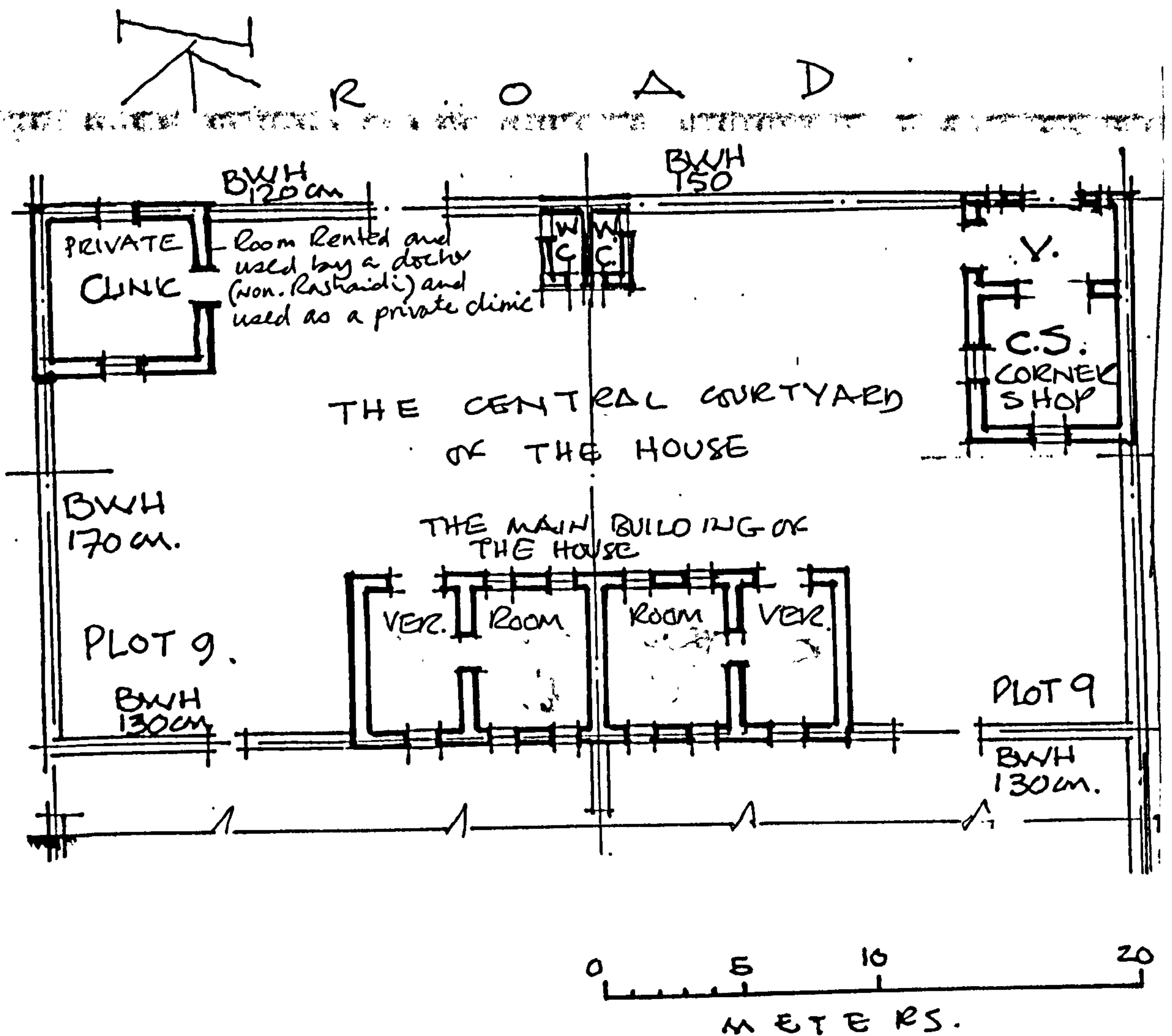


Fig. 7.9. PLAN OF THE HOUSE BUILT ON PLOTS 8 AND 9 MANSOURA (BANAT SOUTH) SHOWING HOW THE CORNER SHOP IS CONNECTED TO THE COURTYARD OF THE HOUSE. (Scale 1:250)

(Source: the author)

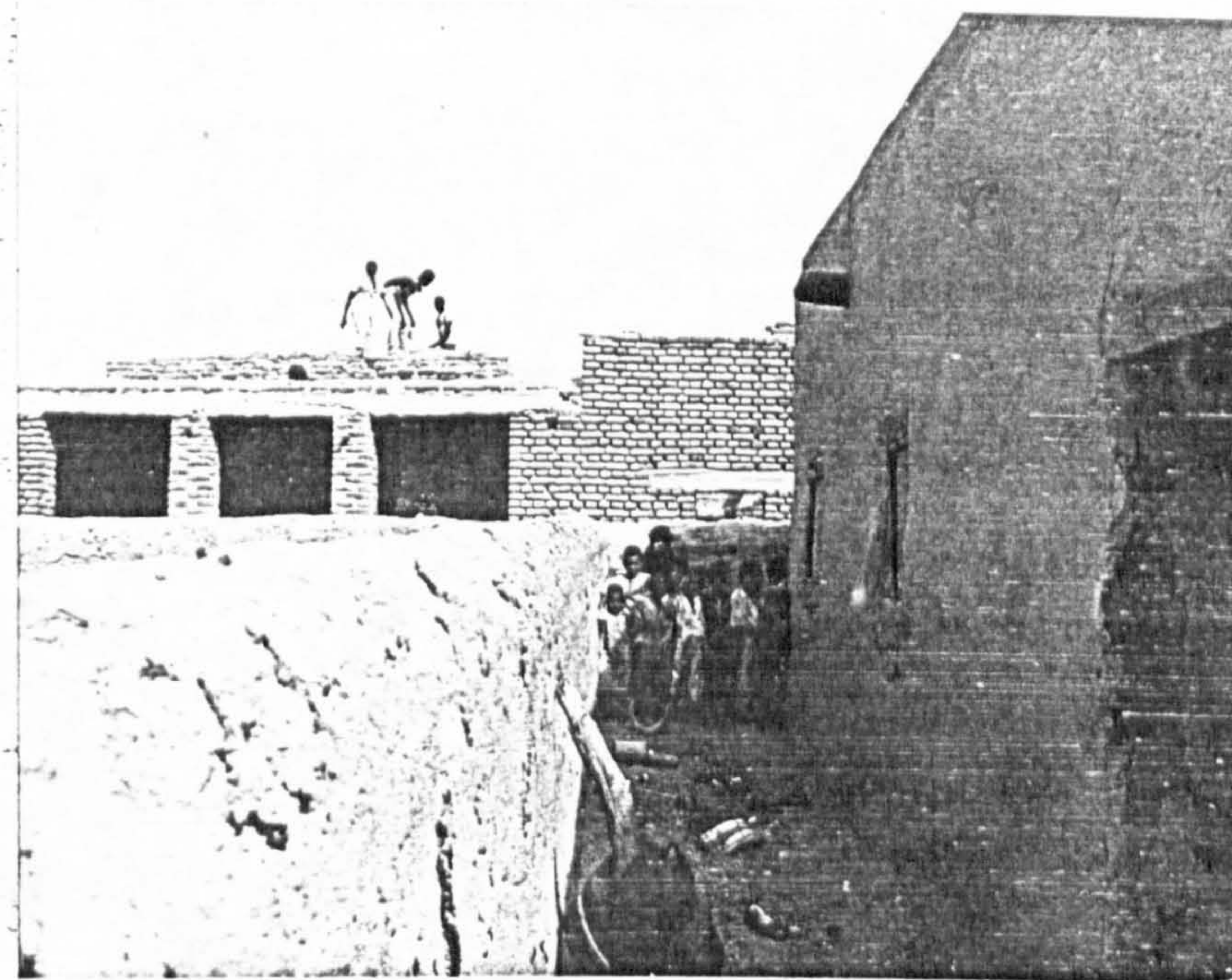
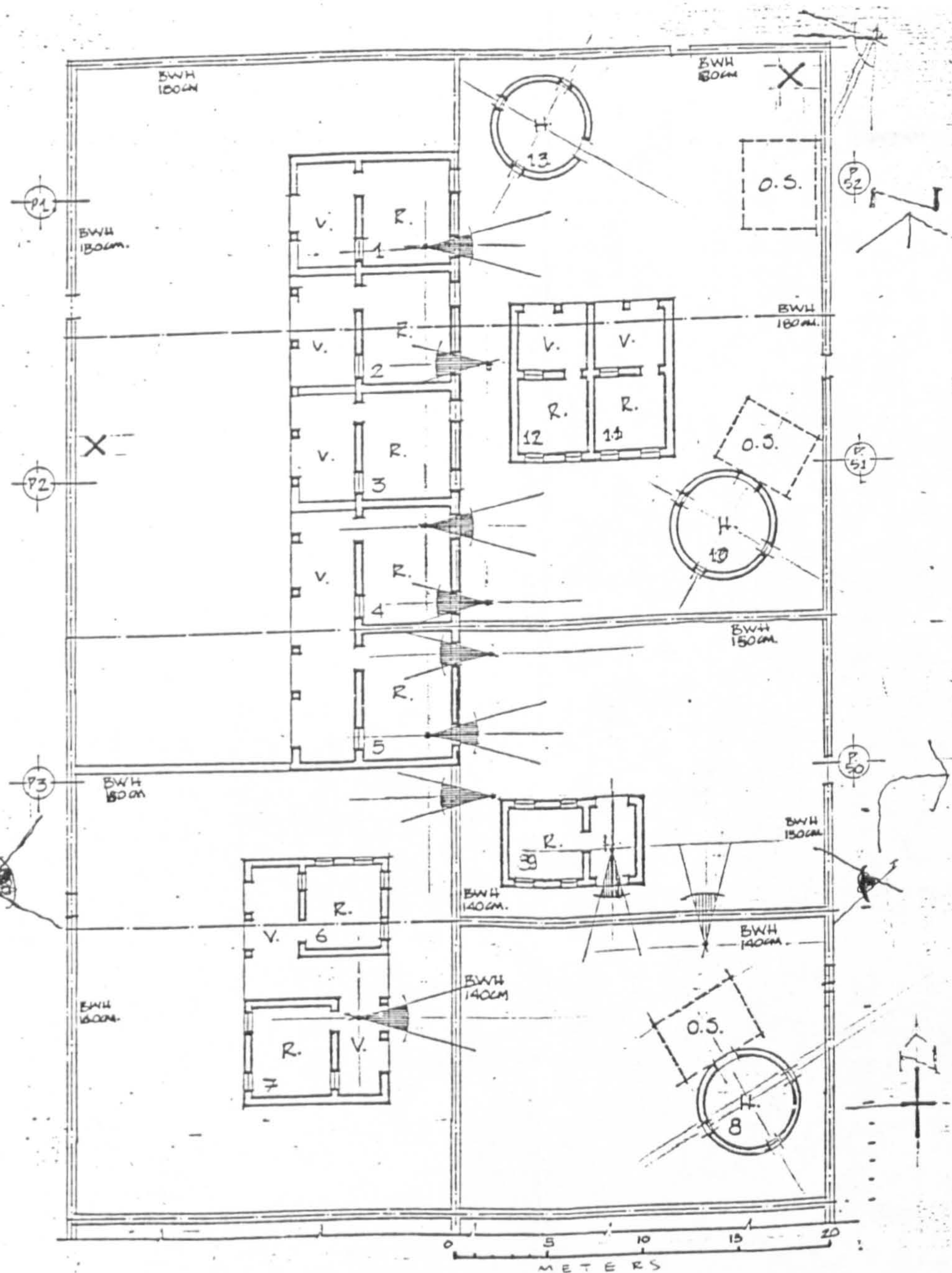
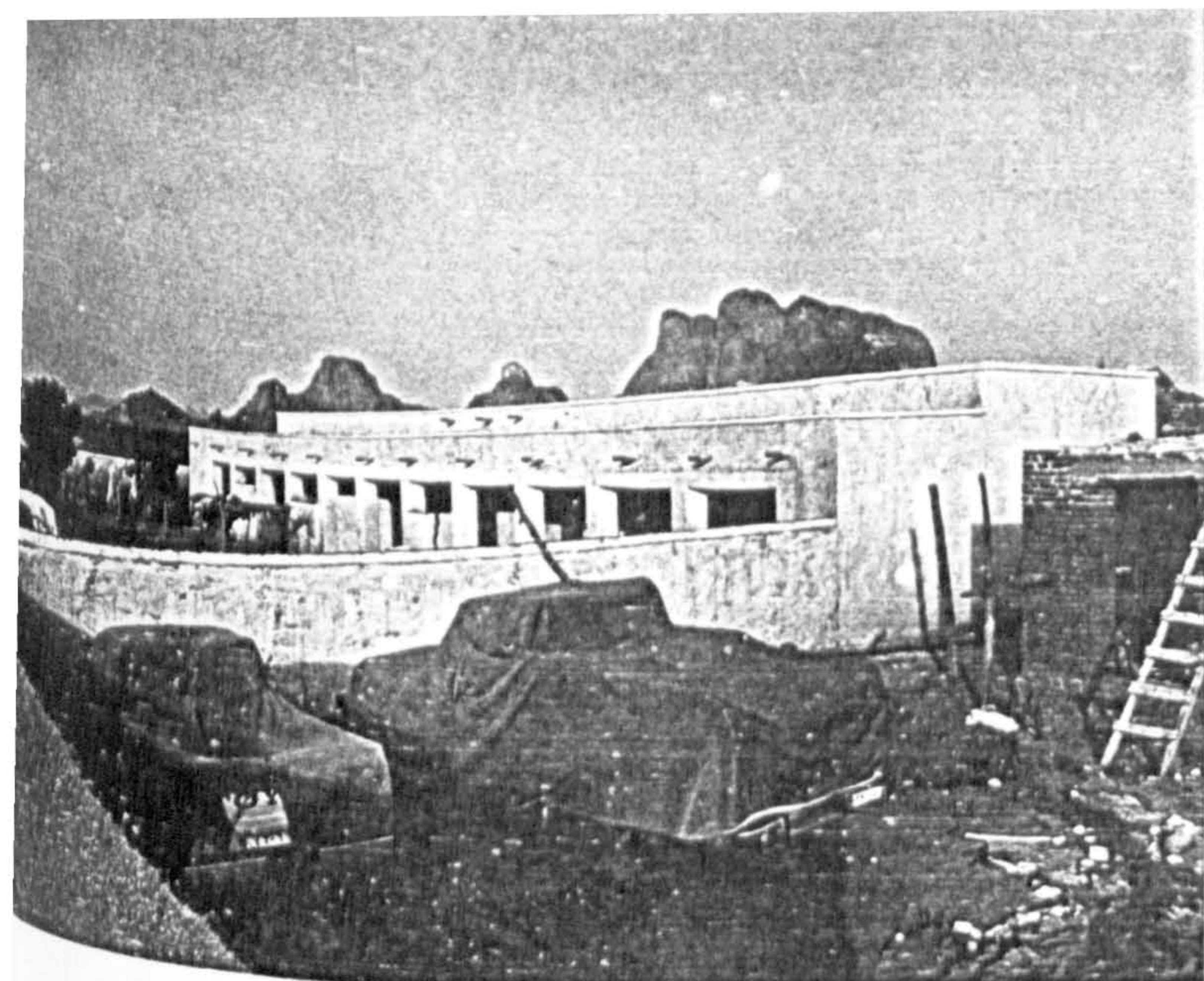


Fig. 7.10. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PART OF A HOUSING BLOCK IN MASTURA INHABITED BY RASHAIDAA HOUSEHOLDS.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- V. Verandah.
- H. Hut.
- O.S. Open shed.
- BWH. Boundary wall height.
- Position enabling visual contact.

The people living in this part of the housing block:

Plots 1, 2, 3 and 4 are amalgamated together in one big plot. Two houses, one big and one small, are built in this plot and inhabited by Salih Muslih, his three wives, his mother and his two married sons. Rooms R.2, R.3 and R.4 are allocated for the three wives of Salih where each one live in a separate room with her grown-up and small children. Eimiri Salih lives with his wife and small children in room R.1. The small house built in plots 3 and 4 are inhabited by Saleem Salih, his wife and their small

children. Saleem works in the Arab Gulf States but his family live in the house.

Plot 49 - The plot is allocated to Mohamed Salih who lives in it with his wife and their small children.

Plot 50 - The plot is allocated to Hamdan Salih who lives in it with his wife and their grown-up and small children.

Plot 51 - The plot is allocated to an old man Awaid Eida - who lives in it with his wife.

Plot 52 - The plot is allocated to Awad Awaid who lives in it with his two wives, married son (in a separate hut) and his small children. Each one of Awaid's wives live in a separate room - R.11 and R.12. His married son - Aeid - lives with his wife and their small children in hut H.13.

The social relationships linking the household heads of the families living in this part of the housing block:

Salih Muslih-Eimiri, Saleem, Mohamed and Hamdan: father-sons; Awaid Eida-Awad Awaid: father-son; Awad Awaid-Aeid Awad: father-son; Salih Muslih-Awad Awaid: brother-in-law.

(Source: the author)

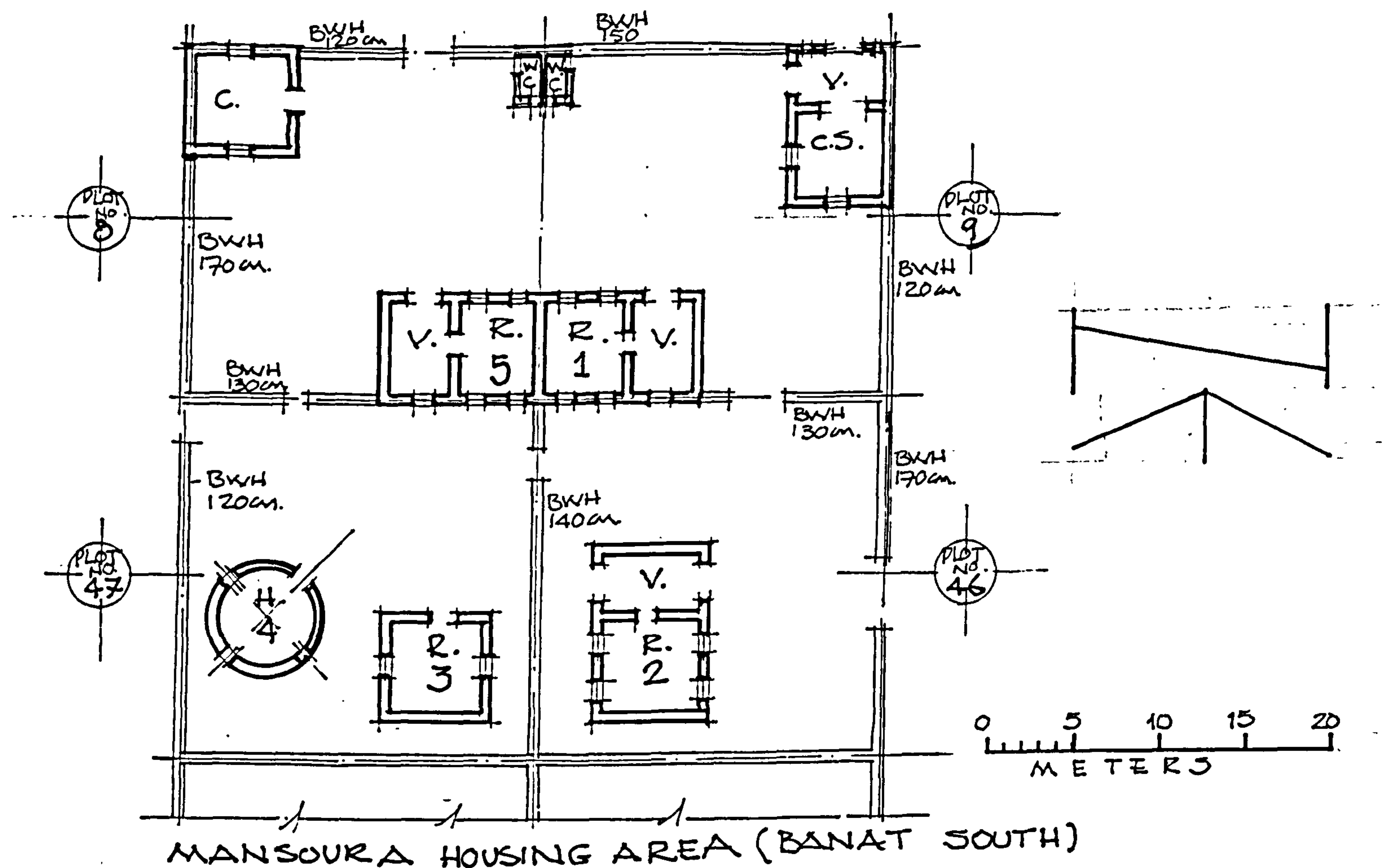


Fig. 7.11. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PART OF A HOUSING BLOCK IN MANSOURA (BANAT SOUTH) INHABITED BY RASHAIDAA HOUSEHOLDS.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- V. Verandah.
- H. Hut.
- C.S. Corner shop.
- C. A room rented as a clinic.
- BWH. Boundary wall height.

The people inhabiting this part of the housing block:

Plot 8 - This plot is allotted to Musa Mahmoud. He lives in it with his younger wife and their grown-up and small children.

Plot 9 - This plot is also allotted to Musa Mahmoud because he has two wives. Musa lives in the room and verandah built in this plot with his second wife and her grown-up and small children.

Plot 46 - This plot is allotted to Hamdan Musa who lives in it with his wife and their grown-up and small children.

Plot 47 - The plot was allotted to Mohamed Musa. Mohamed spends most of his time in Saudi Arabia but his family - his wife and small children - stay in the room and verandah built in the plot. The hut is used as a guest and store room.

The social relationships linking the heads of the elementary families living in this part of the block:

Musa Mahmoud-Hamdan Musa: father-son; Musa Mahmoud-Mohamed Musa: father-son.

(Source: the author)

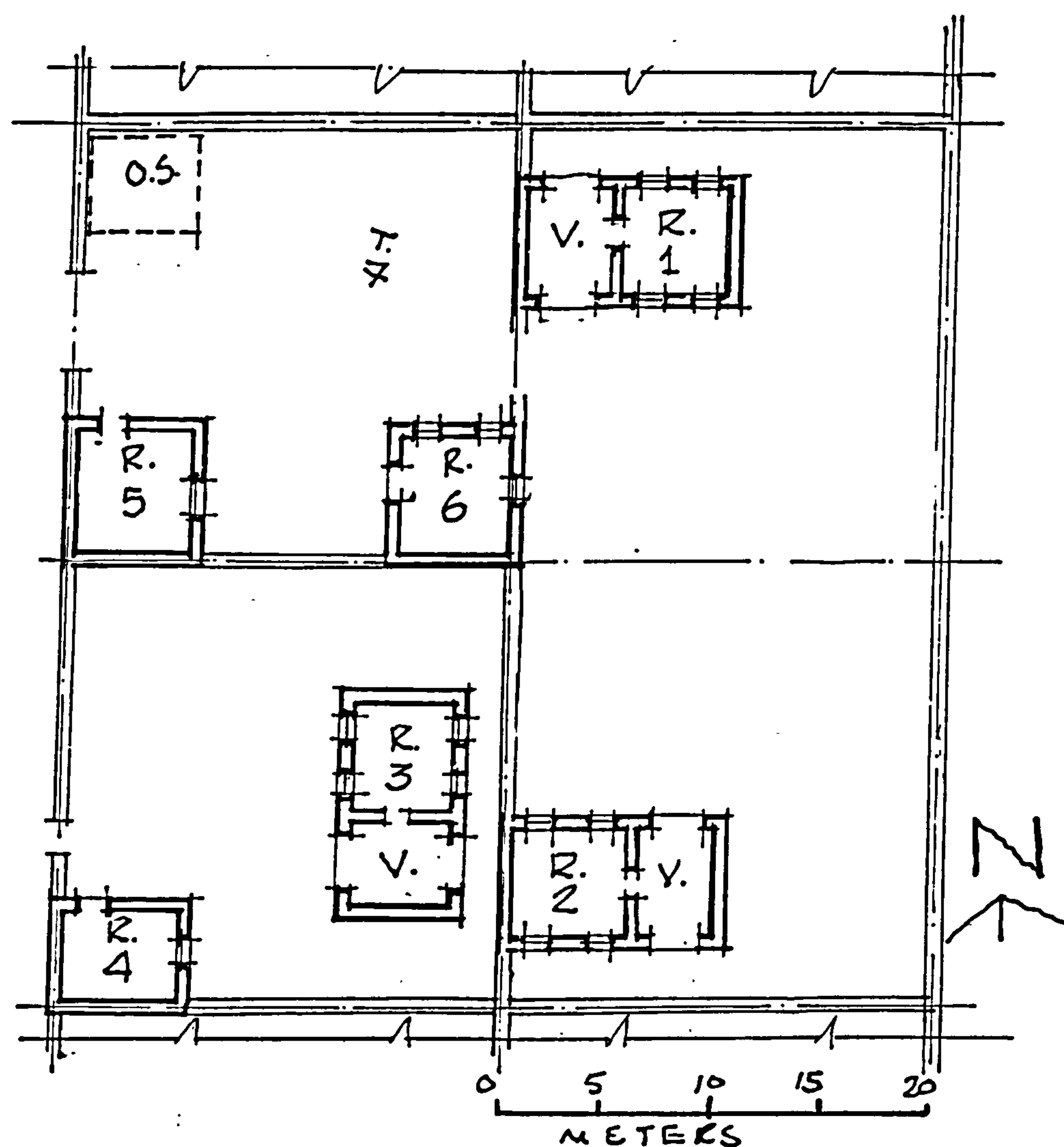


Fig. 7.12. THE DEVELOPMENT OF PART OF A HOUSING BLOCK IN MANSOURA (BANAT SOUTH) INHABITED BY RASHAIDAA HOUSEHOLDS.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- V. Verandah.
- T. Tent.
- O.S. Open shed.
- BWH Boundary wall height.

The people living in this part of the housing block:

- Plot 63 - The plot is allotted to the widow of Murshid Rushwan who lives in room R.5. Her son Hamid Murshid lives with his wife and small children in room R.6. The tent set up in the middle of the plot is inhabited by her other son Ali Murshid his wife and their small children. Ali is a hired herder and

accordingly spends most of his time looking after the animals in the grazing areas, but his family stays behind with his extended family.

Plot 64 - This plot is allotted to Mohamed Murshid Rushwan who lives in it with his wife and small children.

Plot 65 - This plot is allotted to Salih Ibrahim who lives in it with his wife and small daughter. Room R.4 is used as a guest room.

Plot 66 - This plot is allotted to Soilih Murshid Rushwan who lives in it with his wife and their small children.

The social relationships linking the heads of the elementary families living in this part of the housing block:

The widow of Murshid Rushwan - Mohamed Murshis, Ali Murshid, Hamid Murshid, Soilih Murshid: mother-sons. The widow of Murshid Rushwan - Salih Ibrahim: mother-in-law-son-in-law.

(Source: the author)

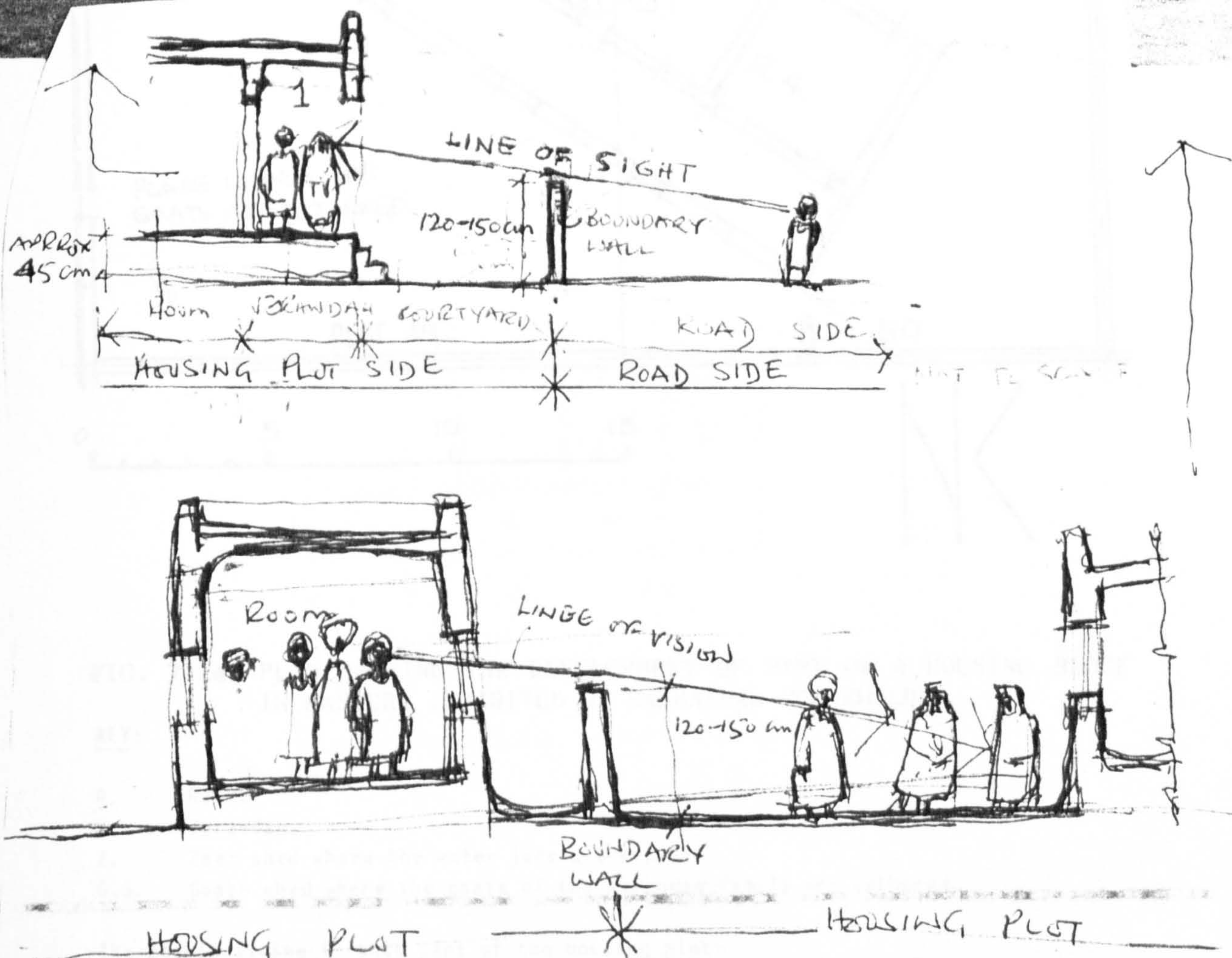
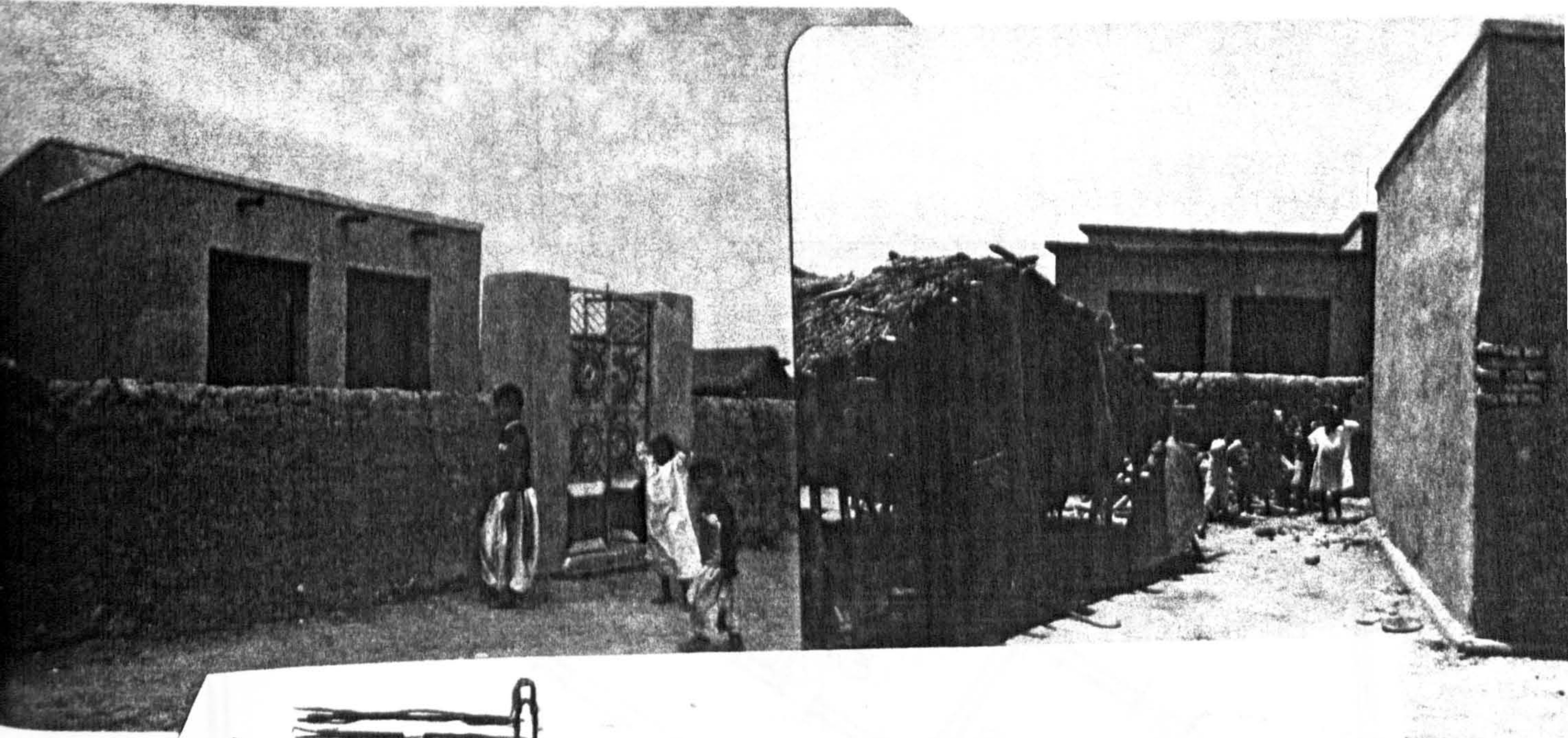


Fig. 7.13. BY BUILDING BOUNDARY WALLS OF LOW LEVEL, AND LIFTING THE FLOOR LEVEL OF THE ROOMS OF THE HOUSE, THE RASHAIDAA ENABLE MEMBERS OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY LIVING IN ADJACENT PLOTS TO MONITOR THE PRIVATE LIFE INSIDE THESE PLOTS. BY THIS MEANS THEY ALSO MAKE IT POSSIBLE FOR THE COMMUNITY MEMBERS PASSING BY SURROUNDING ROADS TO MONITOR THE PRIVATE LIFE INSIDE THESE PLOTS.

(Source: the author)

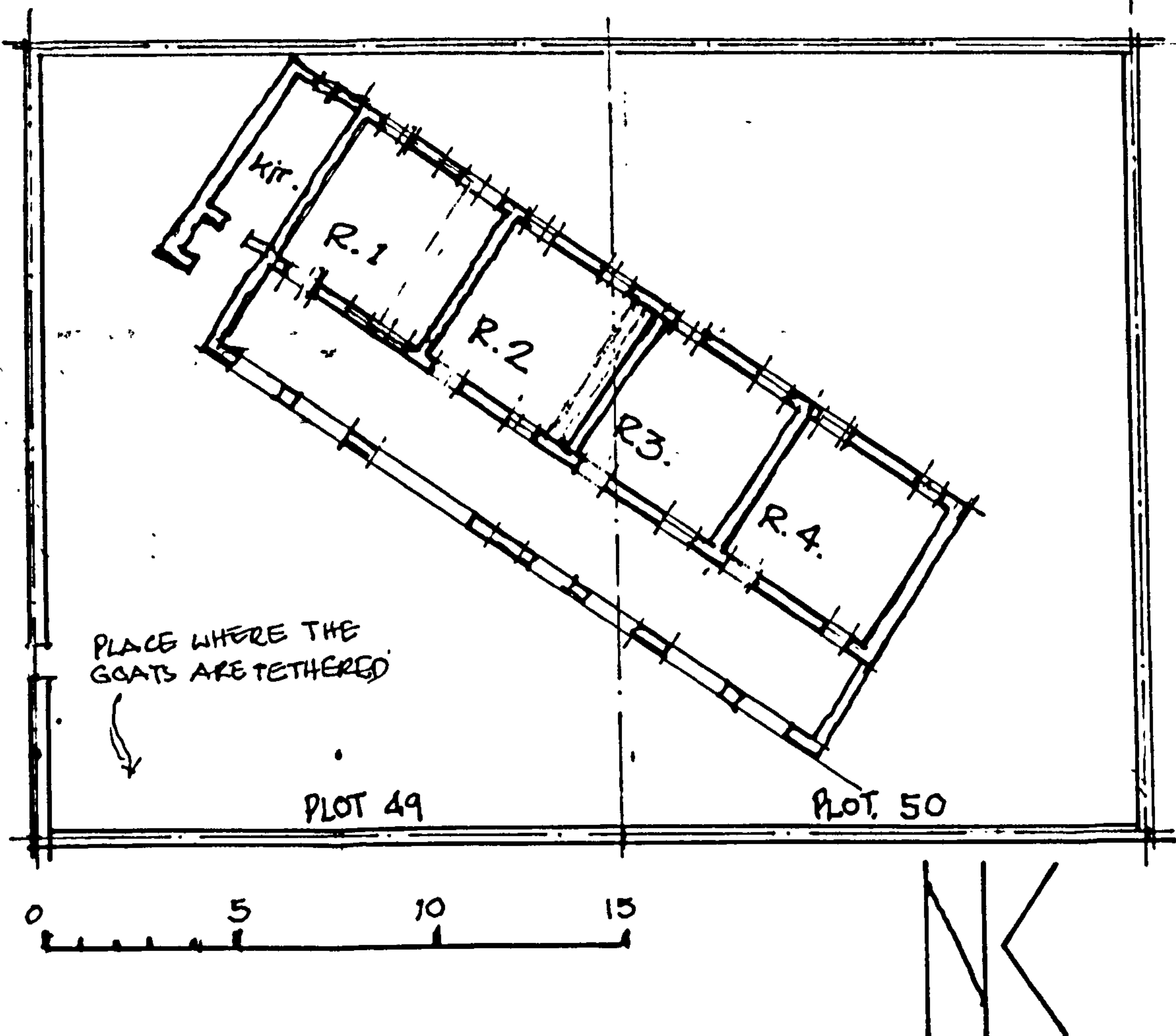


FIG. 7.14. PLAN SHOWING THE DEVELOPMENT OF PART OF A HOUSING BLOCK IN MASTURA INHABITED BY RASHAIDAA HOUSEHOLDS.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- V. Verandah.
- Z. Zeer shed where the water jars are kept.
- G.S. Goats shed where the goats of the extended family are tethered.

The people living in this part of the housing plot:

Plots 49 and 50 are allotted to Awaid Hamid because he has two wives living with him in Mastura. Awaid lives with his wives and two sons in the big house built on the large area created by amalgamating his plots with those of his sons (Plots 49 and 50). Awaid's younger wife lives with her small children in room R.2. His elder wife lives with her grown-up and small children in R.3. His son Hameed lives with his wife and small children in room R.1. Room R.4 is inhabited by the elder son of Awaid-Ahmed, his wife and their small children.

(Source: the author)

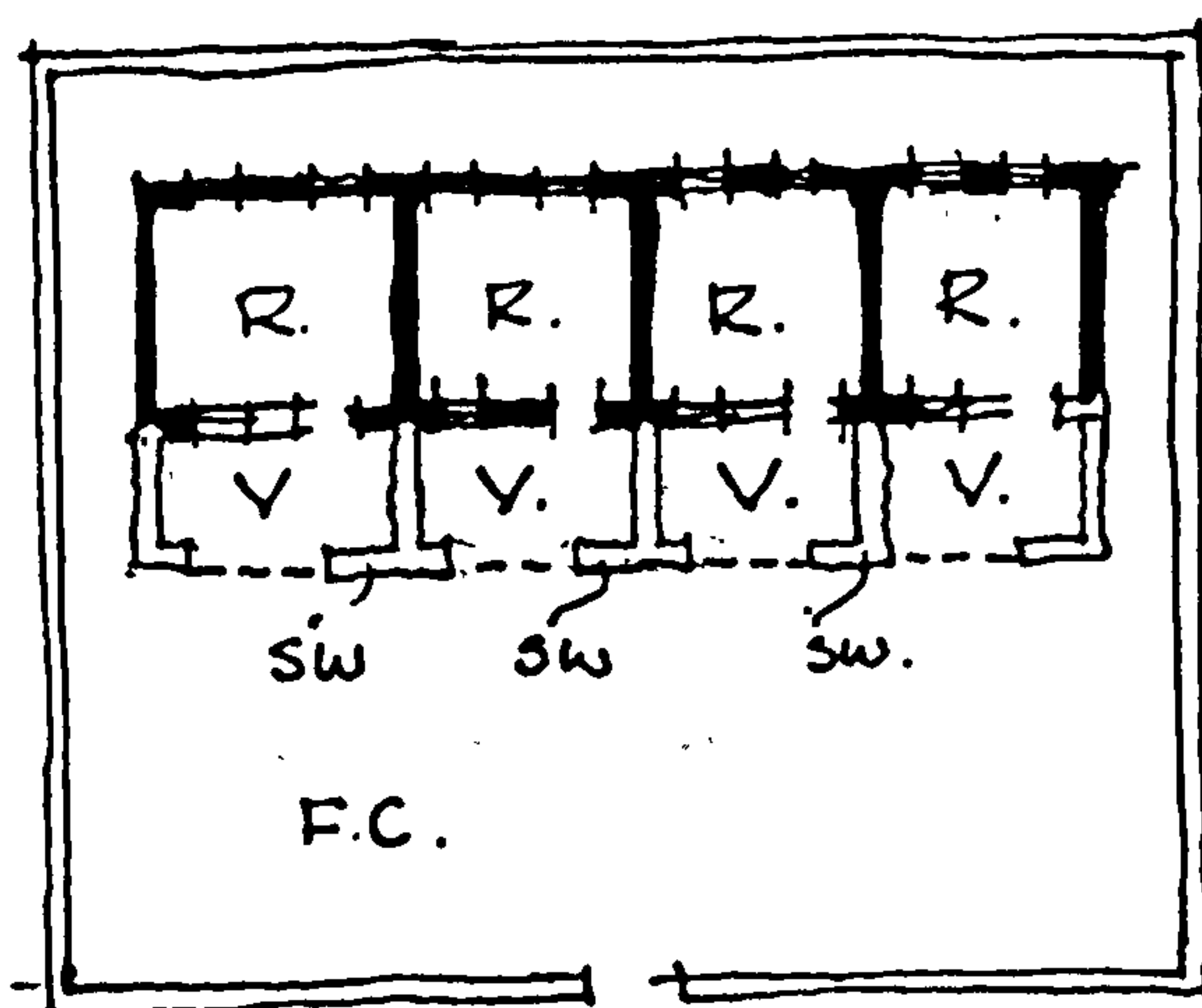


Fig. 7.15. THE TYPE OF HOUSE LAYOUT USUALLY USED FOR ACCOMMODATING THE CO-WIVES OF THE RASHAIDAA MAN IN URBAN AREAS.

KEY:

- R. Room.
- V. Verandah.
- F.C. The forecourt of the house.
- S.W. Short wall dividing the verandah into various sections.

(Source: the author)

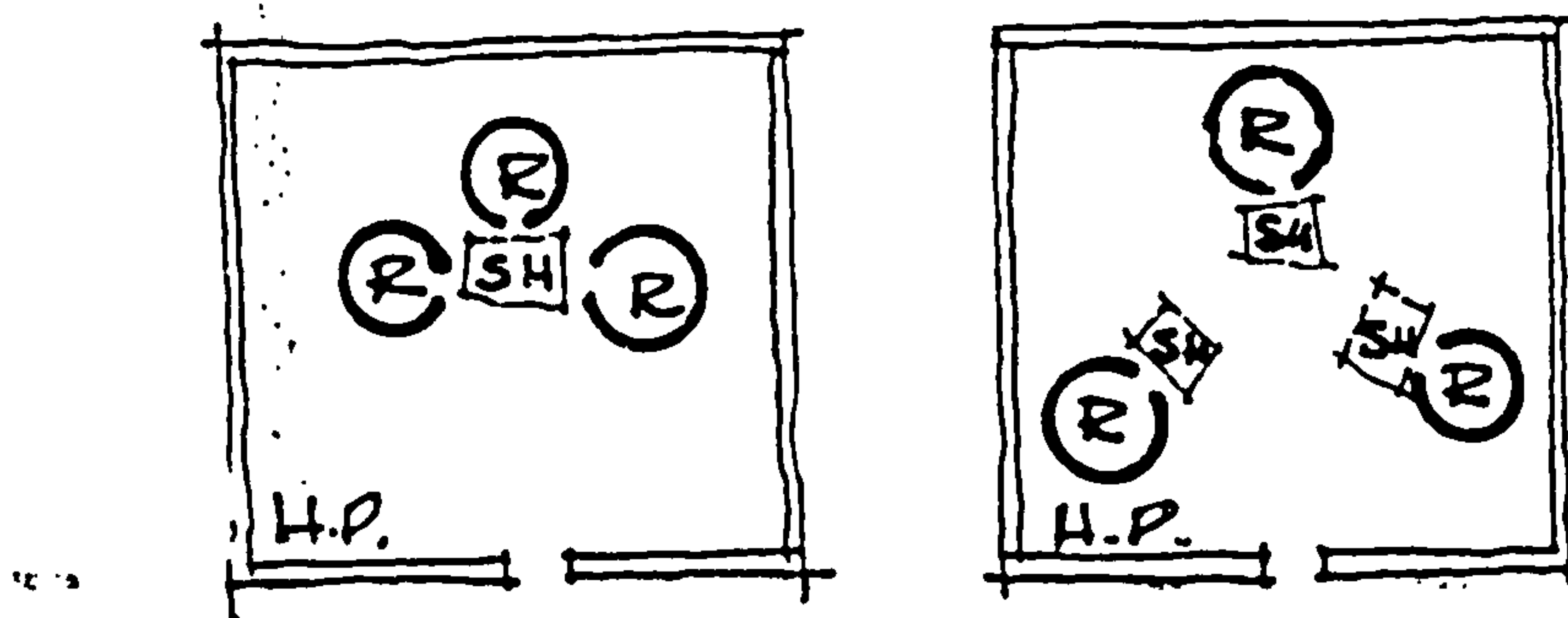


Fig. 7.16. THE HUTS ACCOMMODATING THE RASHAIDAA ELEMENTARY FAMILIES LIVING TOGETHER IN THE SAME HOUSING PLOT ARE LAYED OUT IN SUCH A WAY THAT THEY OPEN INTO THE CENTRAL COURTYARD OF THE HOUSE.

(Not to scale)

KEY:

R. Room.
SH. Shed.
H.P. Housing plot.

(Source: the author)

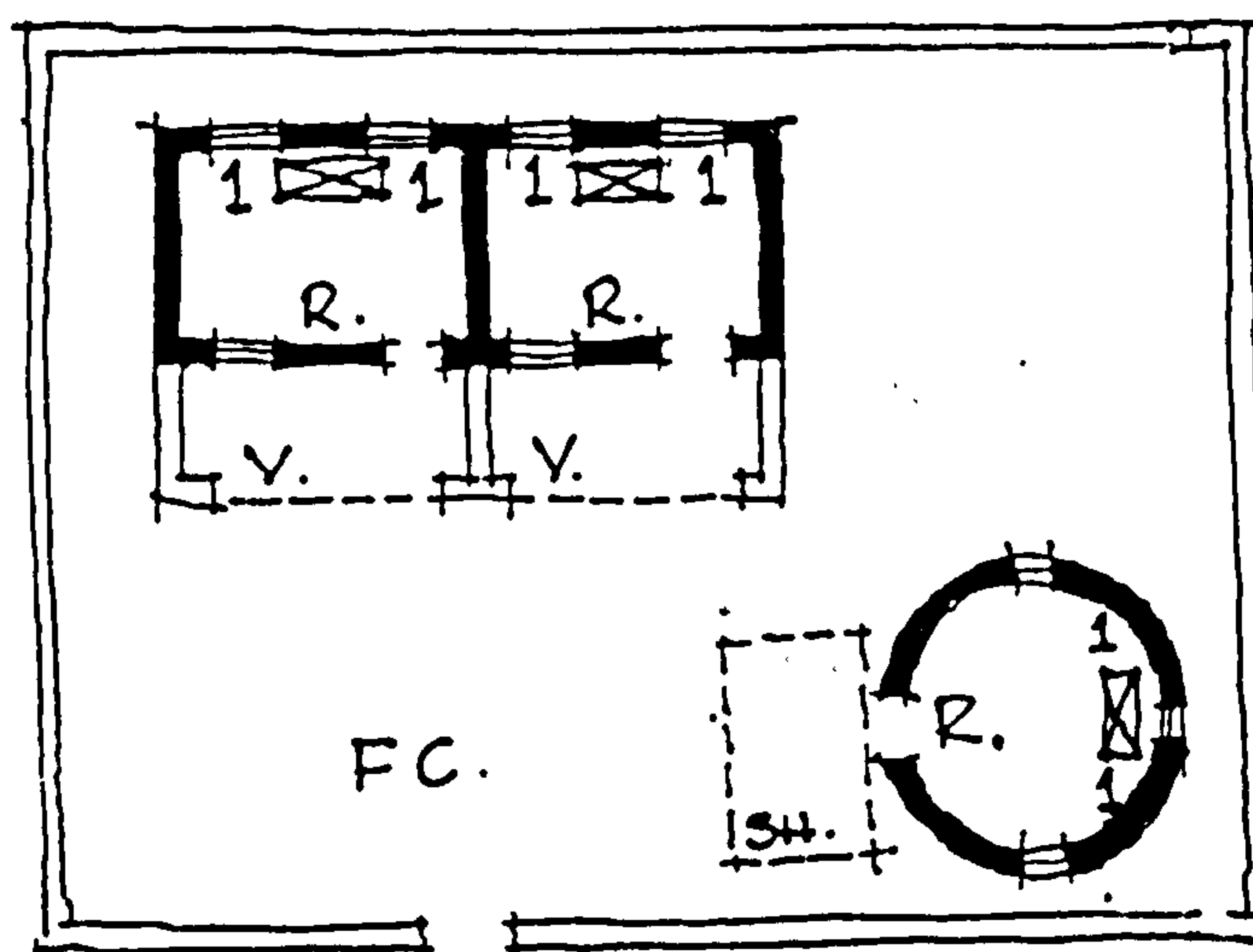


Fig. 7.17. THE MOST WIDELY USED LAYOUT THROUGH WHICH THE HOUSES OF THE RASHAIDAA ELEMENTARY FAMILIES LIVING TOGETHER IN ONE HOUSING PLOT ARE RELATED TO EACH OTHER. (Not to scale)

KEY:

FC. Forecourt.
R. Room.
V. Verandah.

(Source: the author)

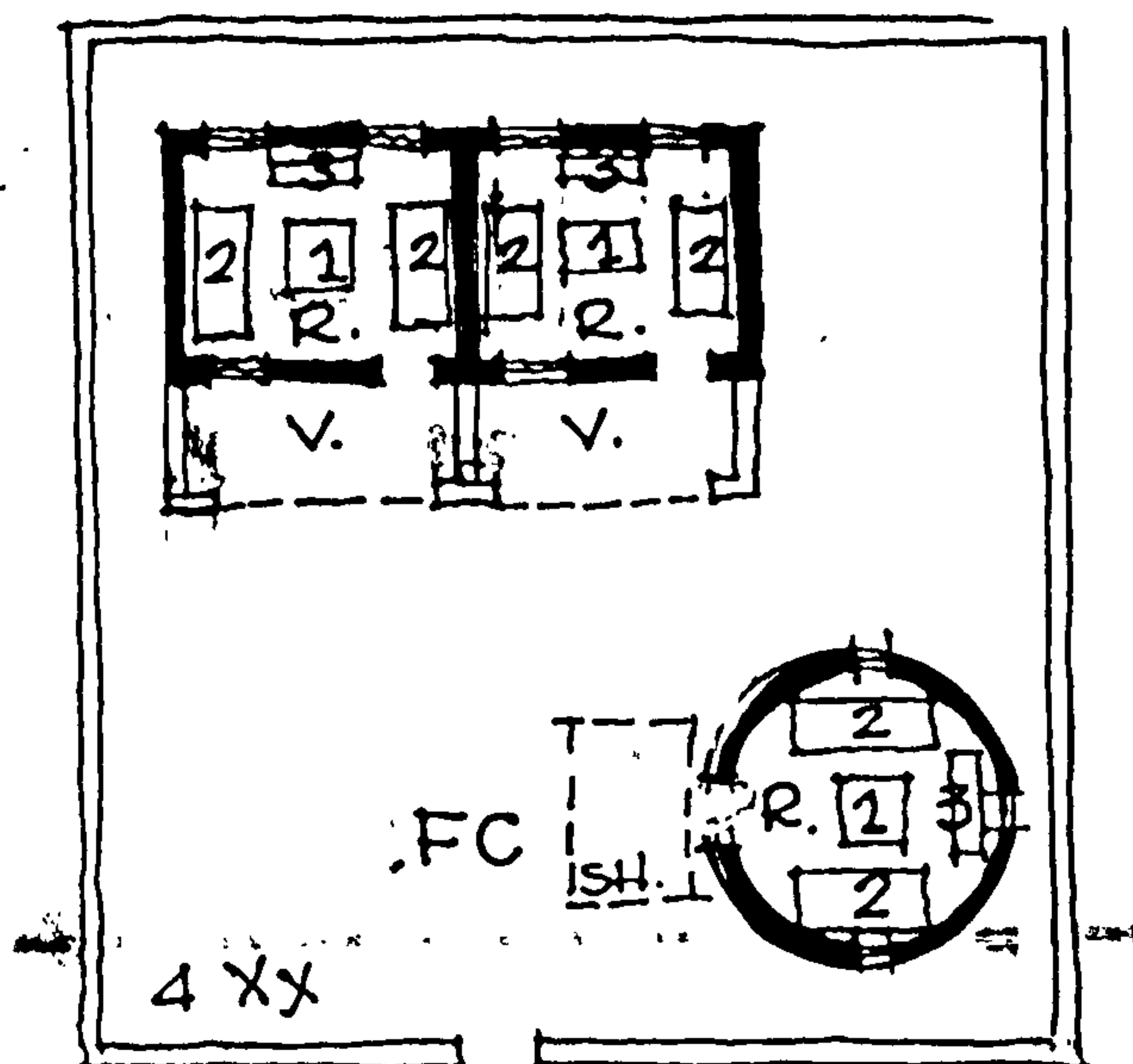


Fig. 7.18. PLAN SHOWING THE LAYOUT OF THE ROOMS AND HUTS INSIDE THE RASHAIDAA HOUSE AND THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE PIECES OF FURNITURE INSIDE EACH ONE OF THESE ROOMS.

(Not to scale)

KEY:

- | | | | | | |
|----|-------------------------------------|-----|-----------|-----|-------------|
| 1- | The floor mat. | 2- | The bed. | 3- | The cabinet |
| 4- | The place where goats are tethered. | R. | Room. | SH. | Shed. |
| V. | Verandah. | FC. | Forecourt | | |

(Source: the author)

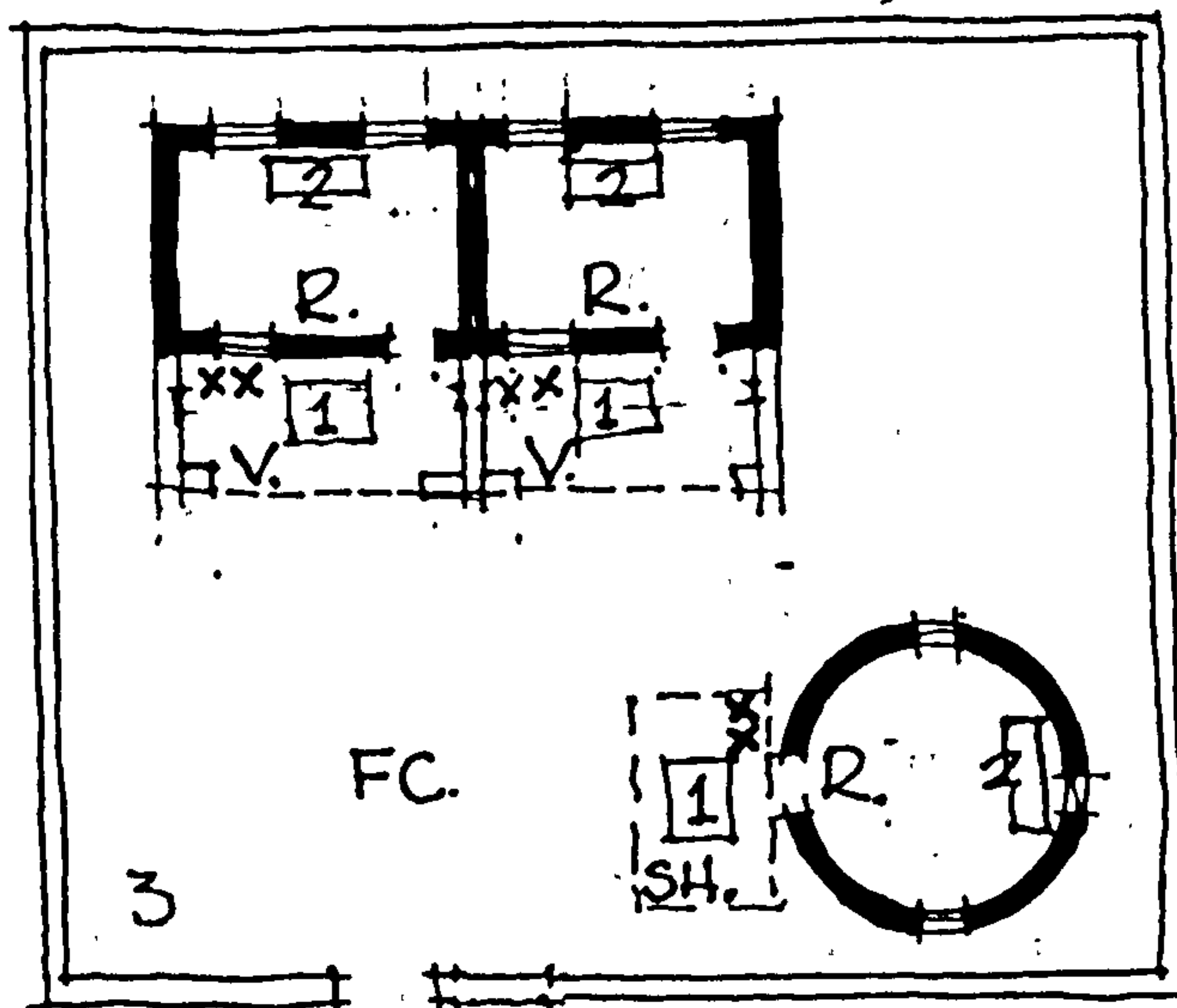


Fig. 7.19. PLAN OF THE RASHAIDAA URBAN HOUSE SHOWING THE SPATIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE COURTYARD OF THE HOUSE AND THE PLACES INSIDE THE ROOMS WHERE THE FOOD RATIONS OF THE INDIVIDUAL ELEMENTARY FAMILIES ARE STORED.

(Not to scale)

KEY:

- | | | | | | |
|-----|--------------|-----|----------------|-----|---|
| 2- | The cabinet. | 1- | The floor mat. | 3- | The place where the goats are tethered. |
| R. | Rooms. | V. | Verandah. | SH. | Shed. |
| FC. | Forecourt | XX. | Firewood. | | |

(Source: the author)

PLATES:

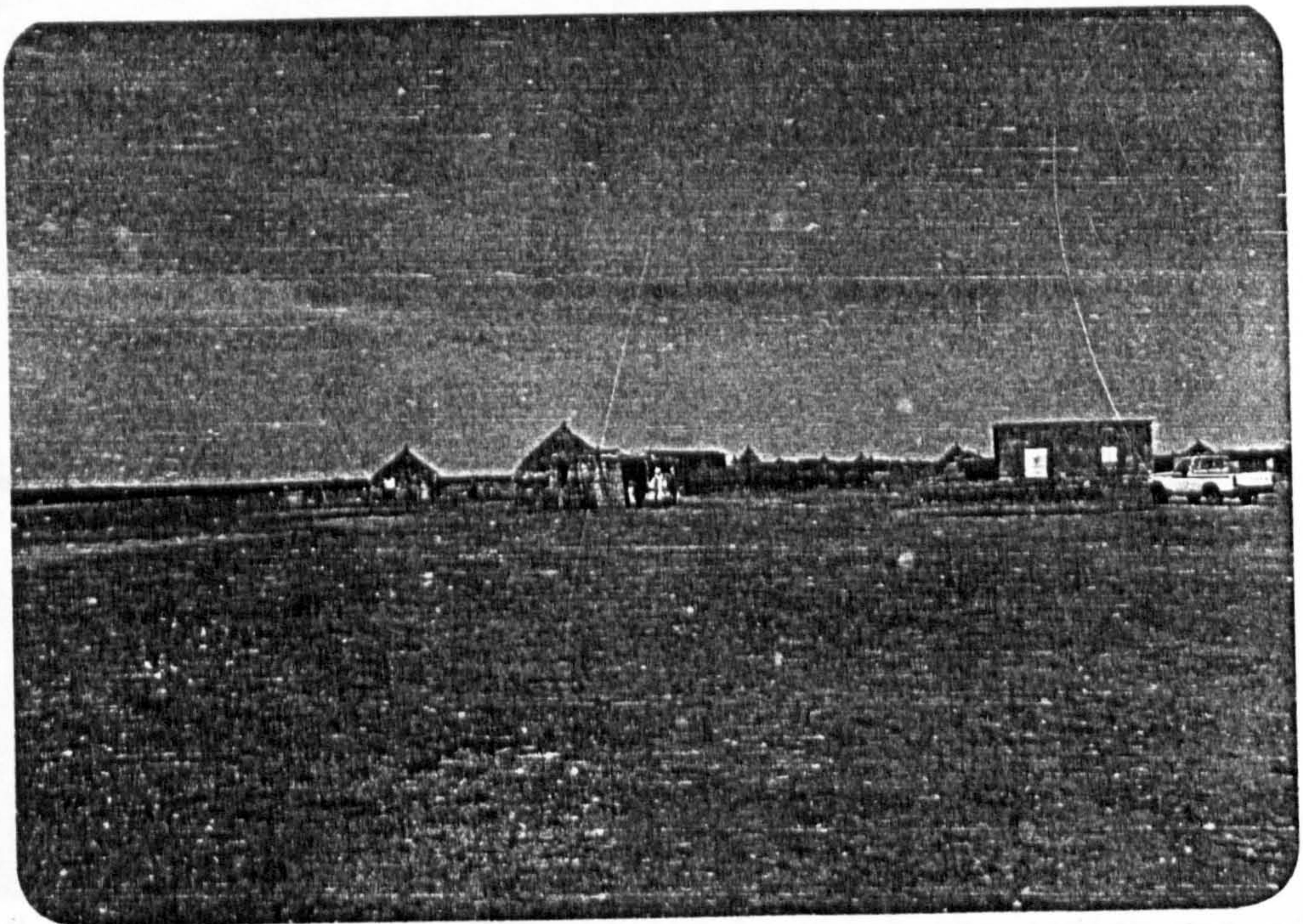


Plate 7.1. (above) During daytime the senior man of the Beja community living in Banat south meets with the community members in the shelter located at the edge of the housing area to discuss their problems.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.2. and 7.3. (above) The shelter in which the senior man of the Beja living in Banat south administer the affairs of the community is also used for the informal religious education of the children.

(Source: the author)

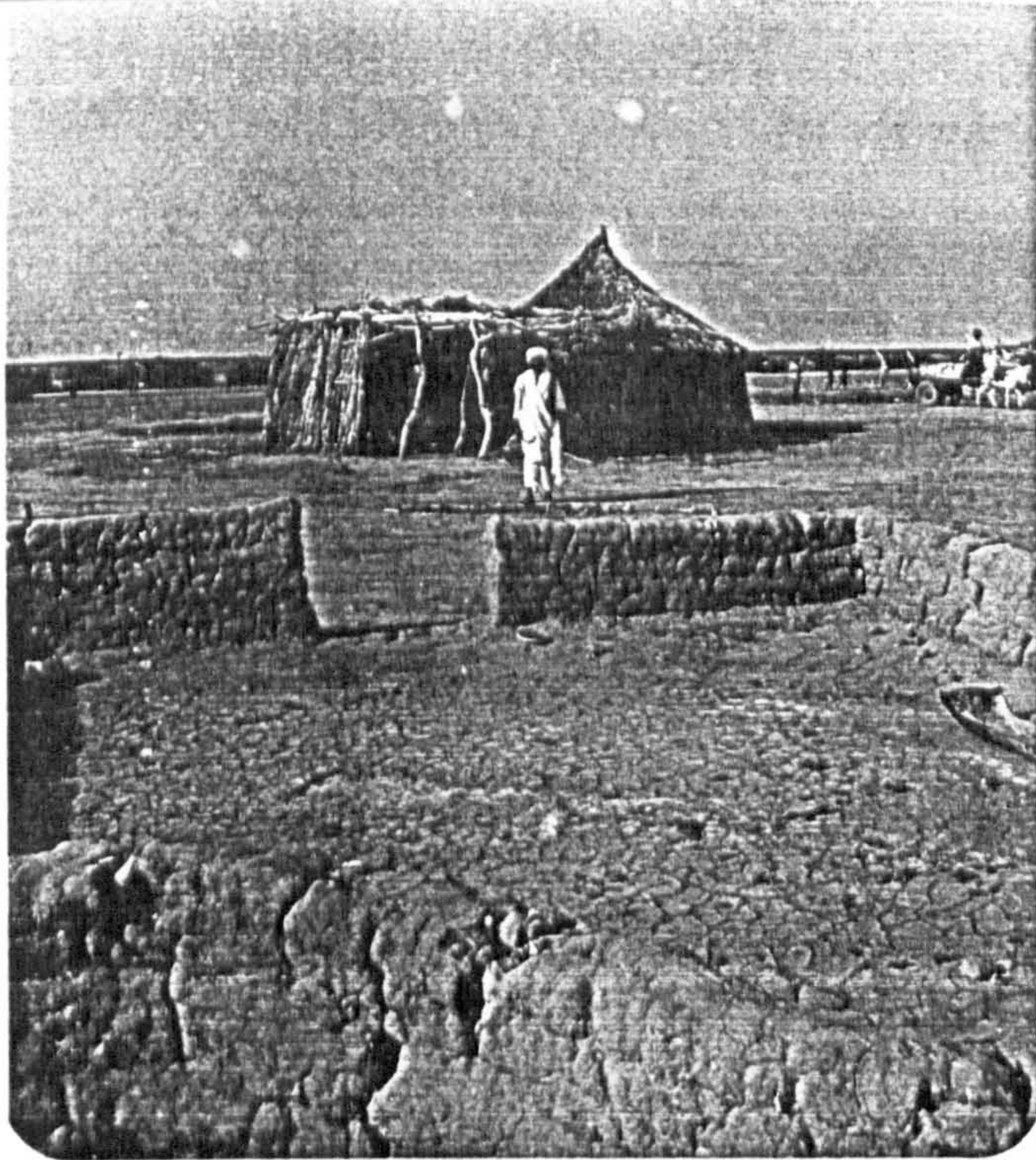


Plate 7.4. The shelter used for the informal administration and education of the Beja community in Banat south gains more significance because it is located near to the area prepared for collective prayers (shown in the foreground of the picture).

(Source: the author)

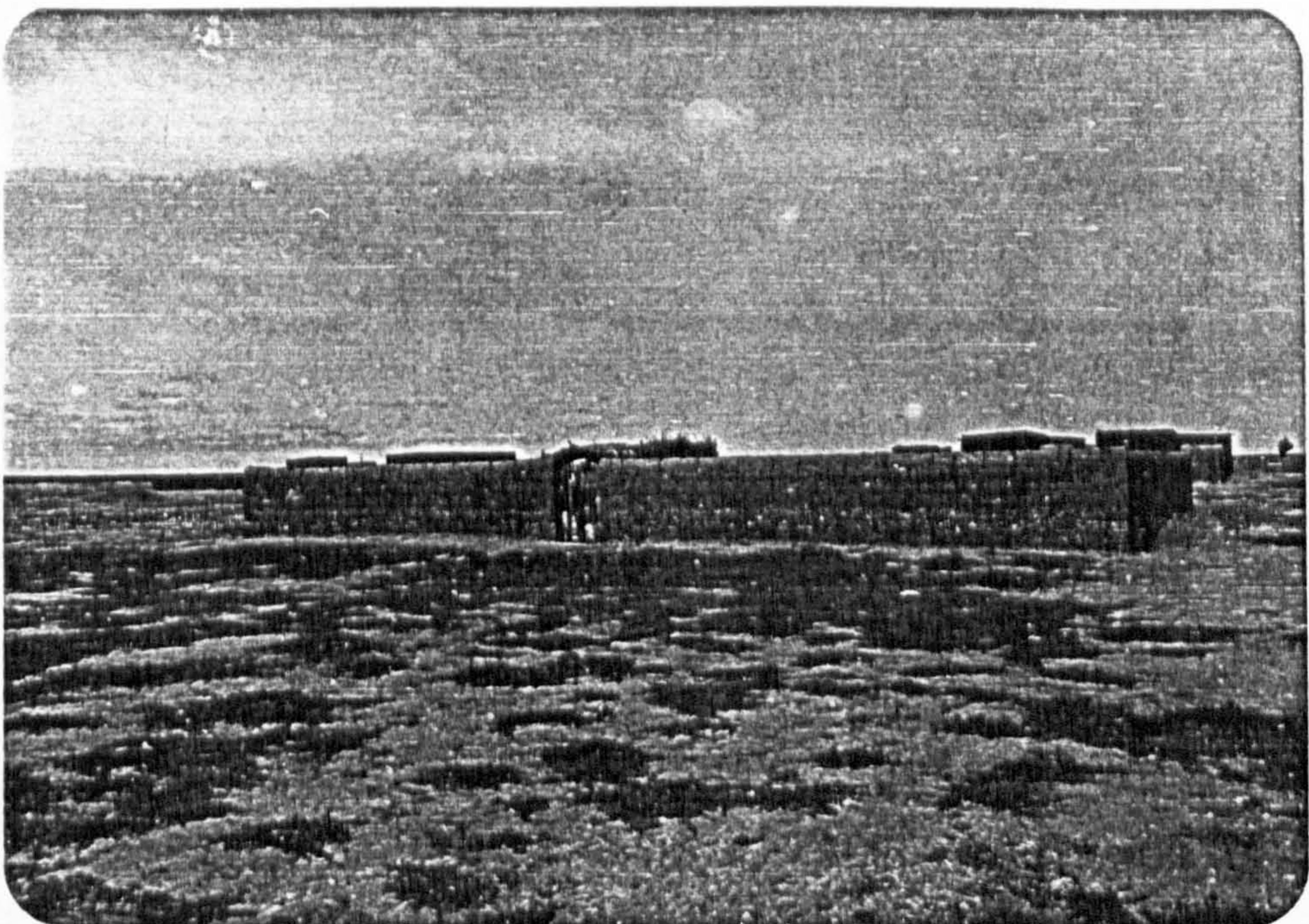


Plate 7.5. The mosque built by the Beja community living in Banat south.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.6. The stock of firewood collected by the children of the Beja community in Banat south stacked in the courtyard of the mosque.

(Source: the author)

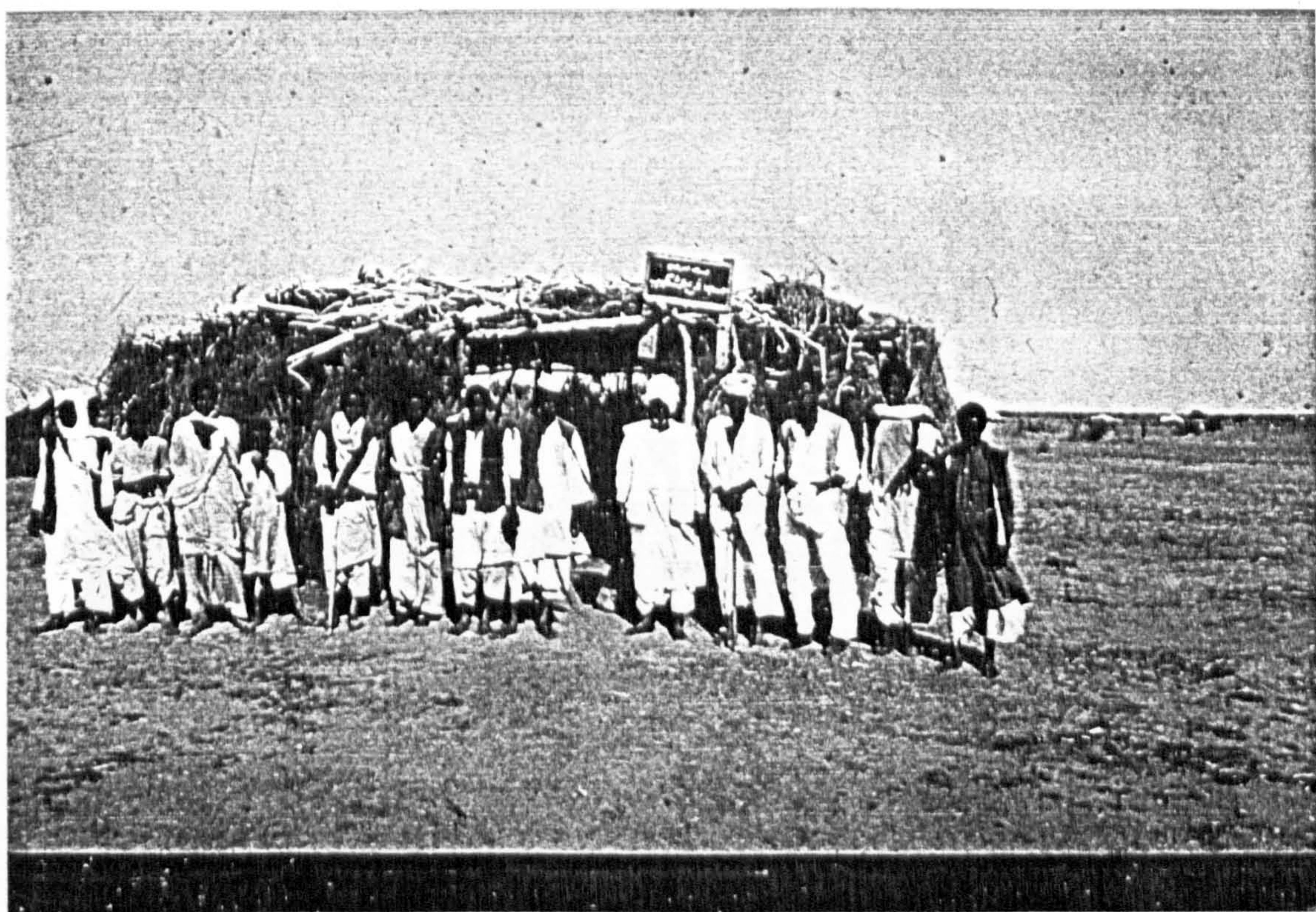


Plate 7.7. Men of the Hadendowa who are followers of a Sufi sect stand in front of the Khalwa built in their settlement at the edge of Waggar.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.8. Trees are planted in the middle of the road in the Beja housing area in Banat south in order to provide shade in the area located in front of the corner shop.

(Source: the author)

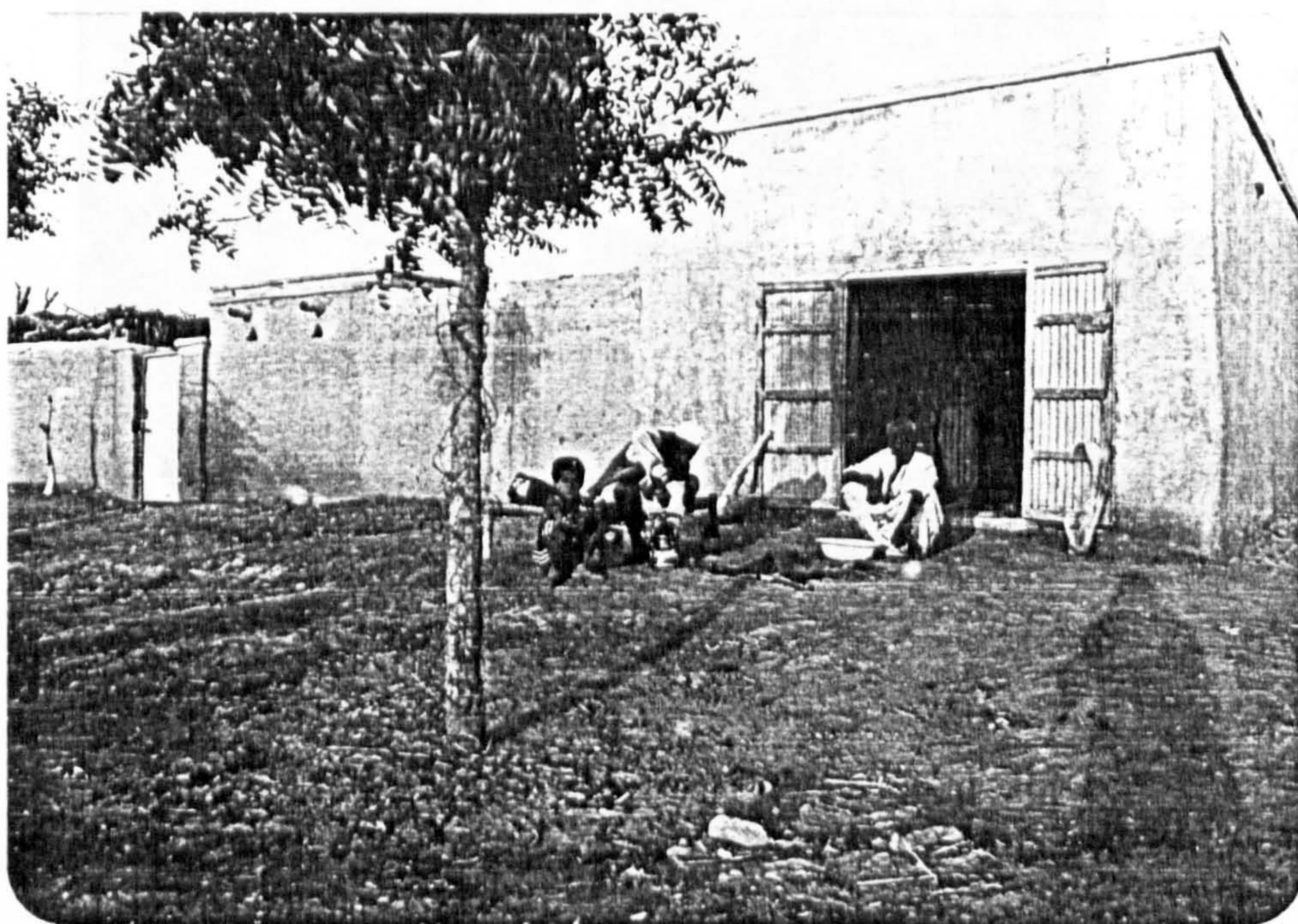
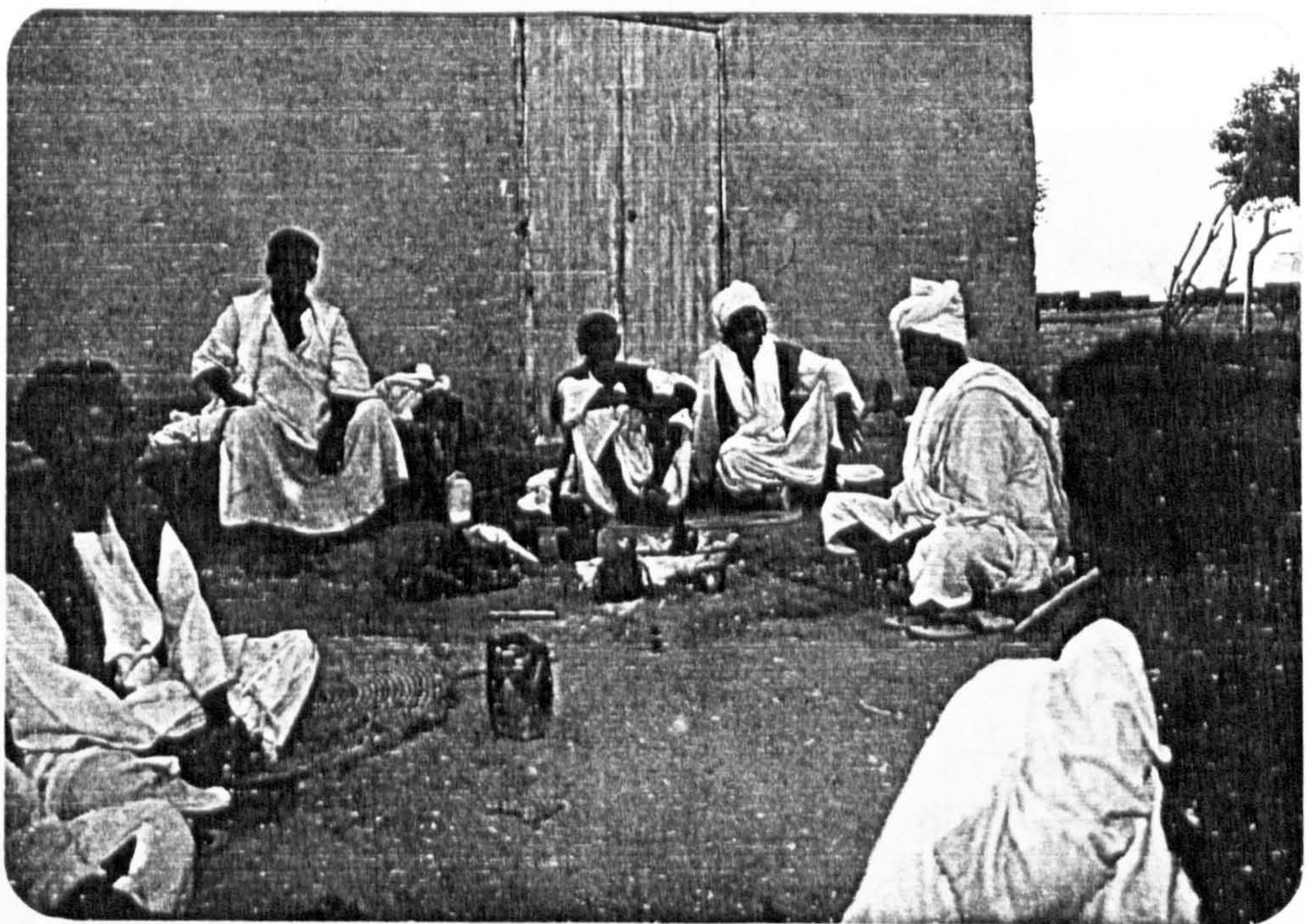
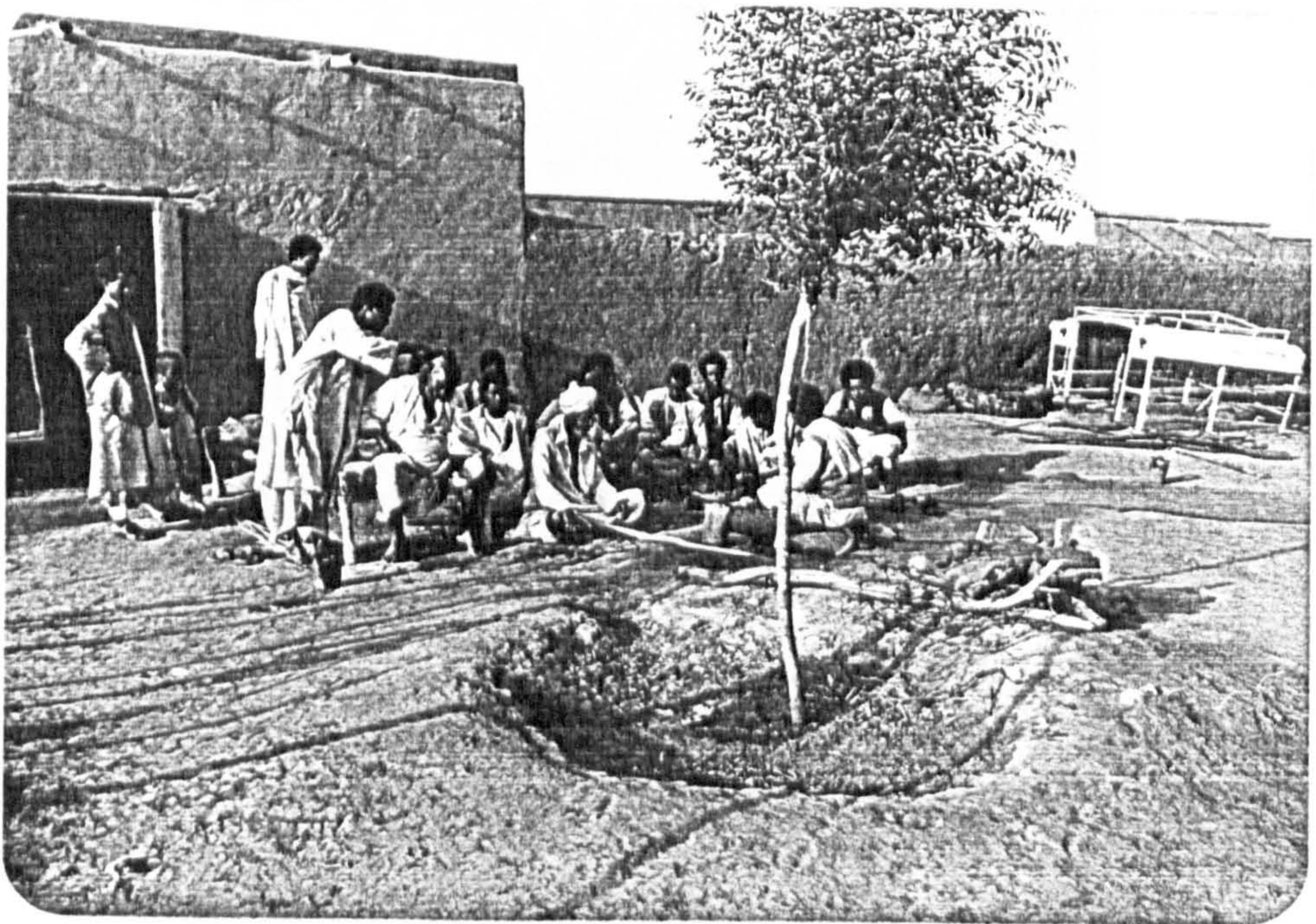


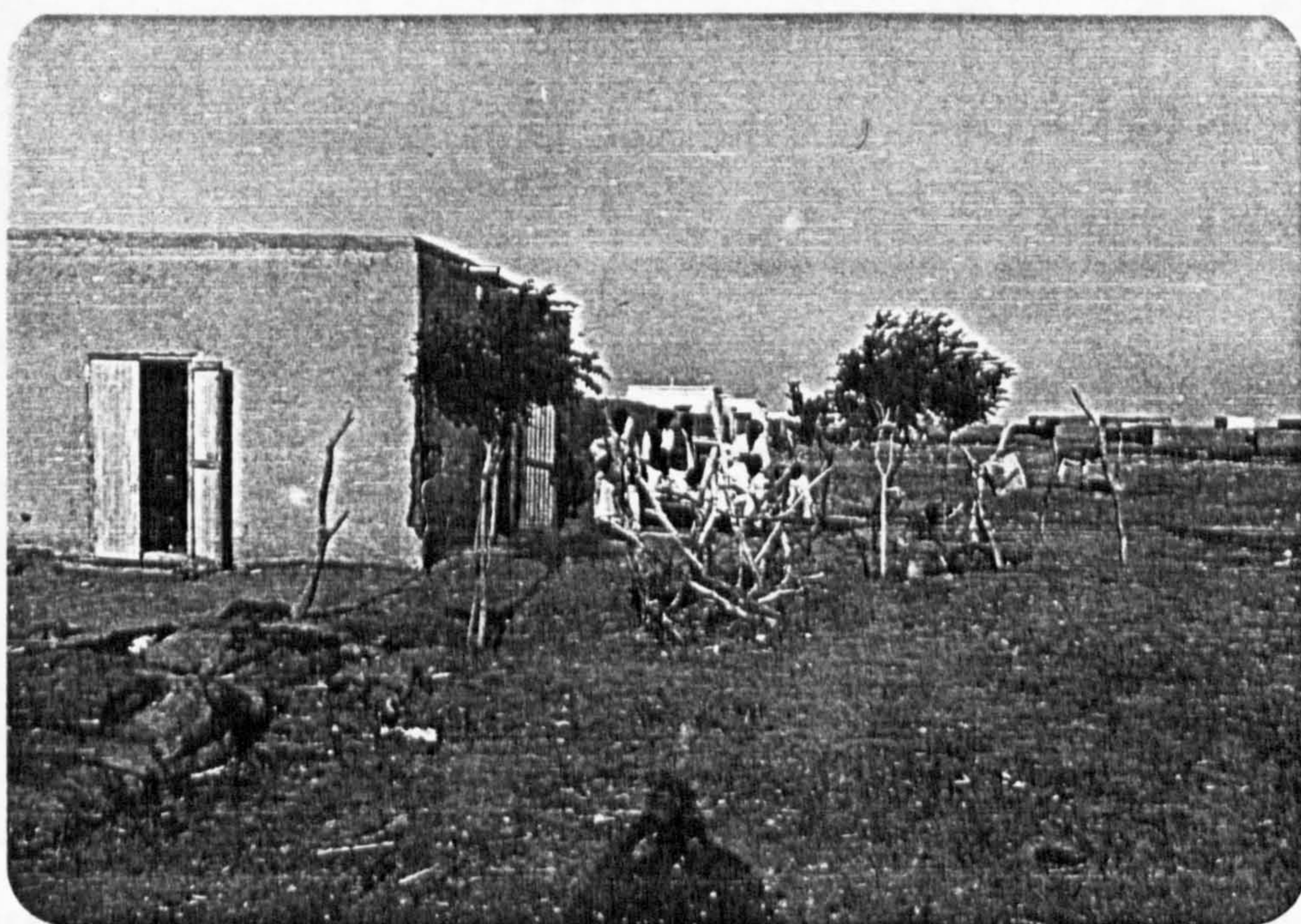
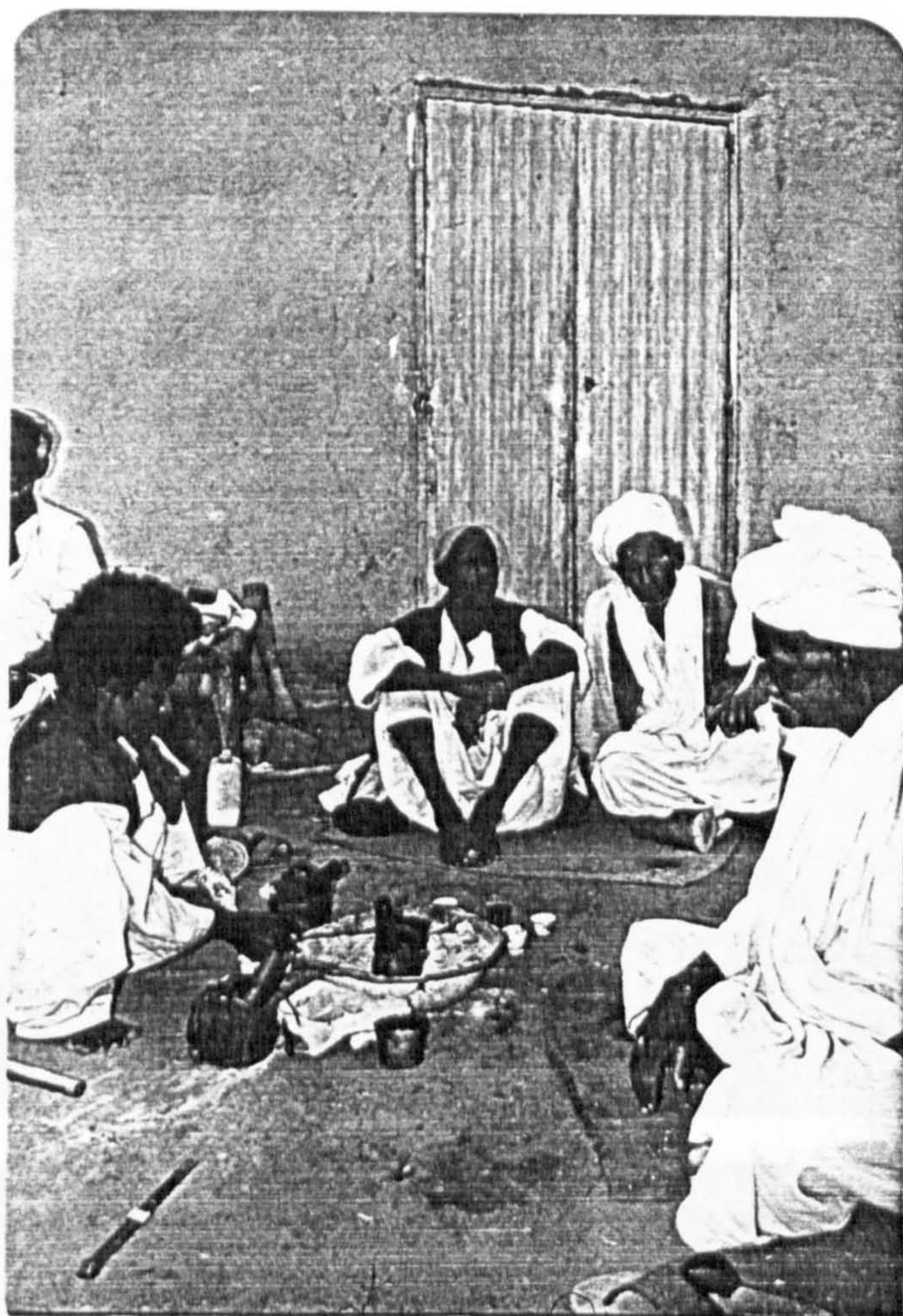
Plate 7.9. A shop-keeper in the Beja housing area in Banat south prepares the gas light needed to light the area around his shop where the men of the neighbourhood gather at night.

(Source: the author)



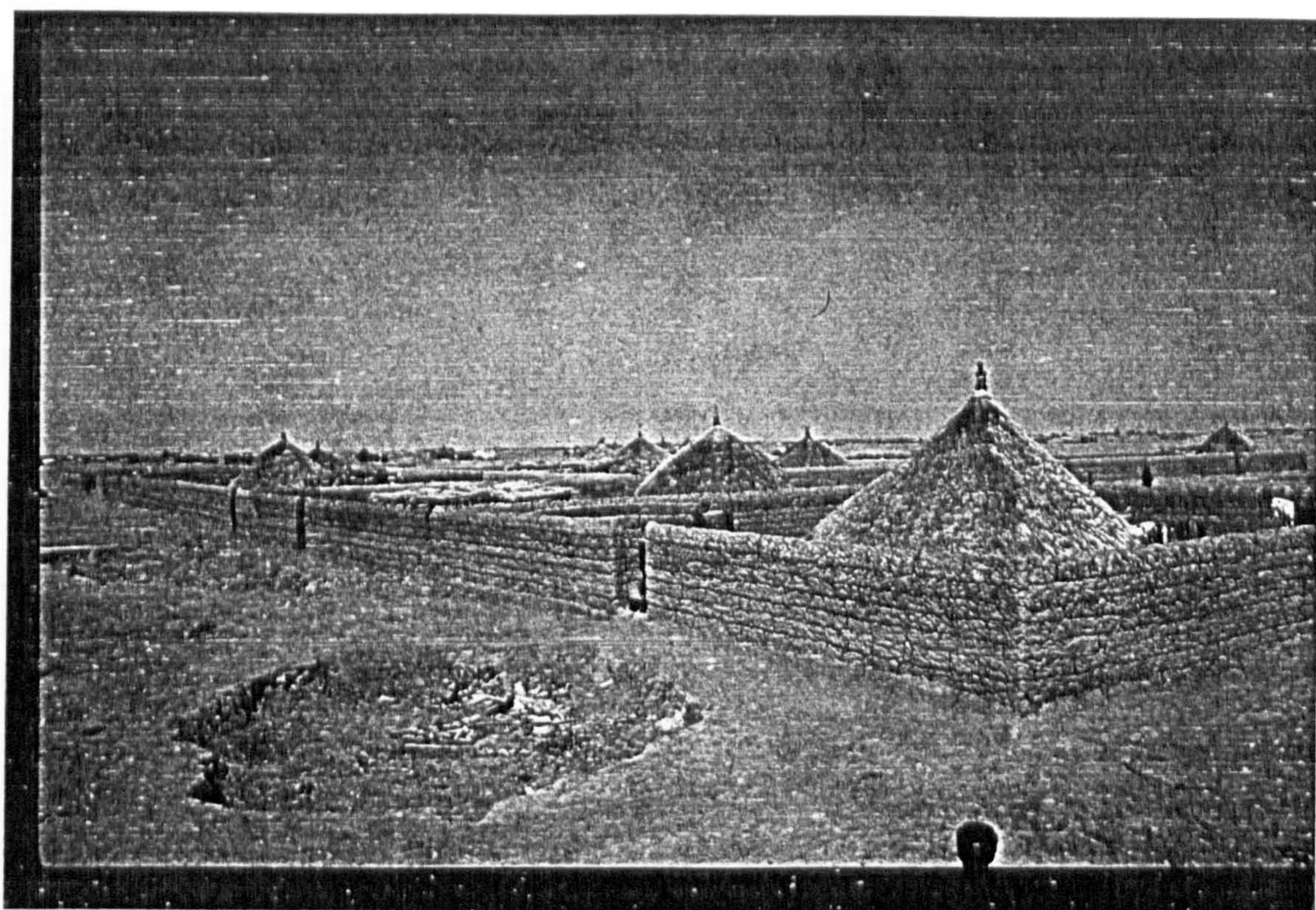
Plates 7.10 and 7.11. (above) The men and boys of the Beja community in Banat south meet each other and entertain their guests in the area located around the corner shops.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.12 and 7.13. (above) The men and boys of the Beja community in Banat south meet each and entertain their guests in the area located around the corner shops.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.14. and 7.15. (above) The financially able Beja who were allotted housing plots in Banat south usually surround their plots by high mud boundary walls.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.16. The poor Beja living in urban areas who can not afford to build mud boundary walls sometimes surround their housing plots by a fence made of thorny bushes.

(Source: the author)

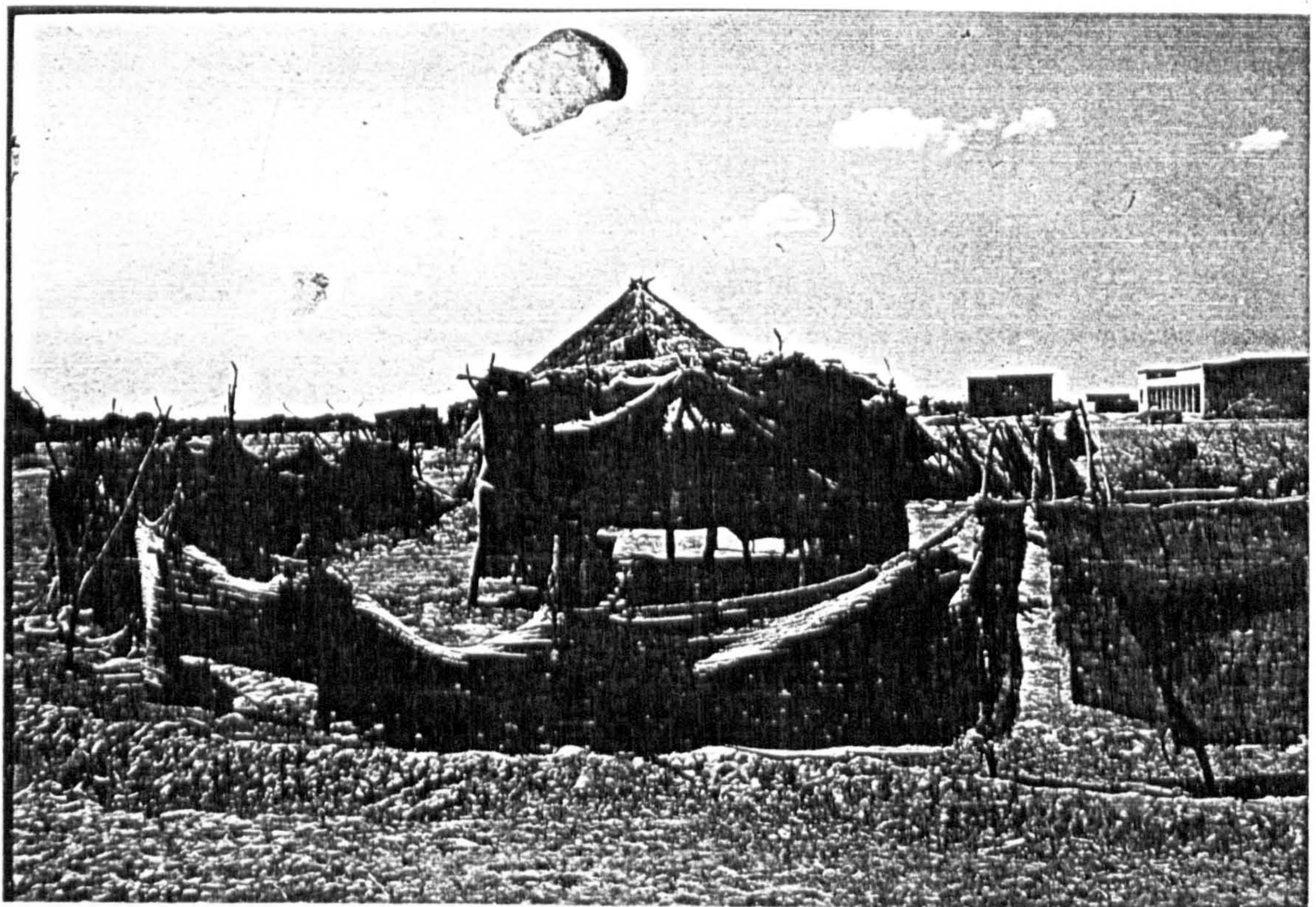


Plate 7.17. The poor Beja who can not afford to build their boundary walls of mud surround their plots sometimes by lengths of sack.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.18. The poor Beja who can not afford to build a mud boundary wall around their plots sometimes surround these plots by a fence made of closely spaced tree branches.

(Source: the author)

Plates 7.19., 7.20., 7.21. On the following two pages are panoramic views showing how the housing plots are related to each other within the housing block at different parts of the areas inhabited by the Beja in Banat south.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.19.

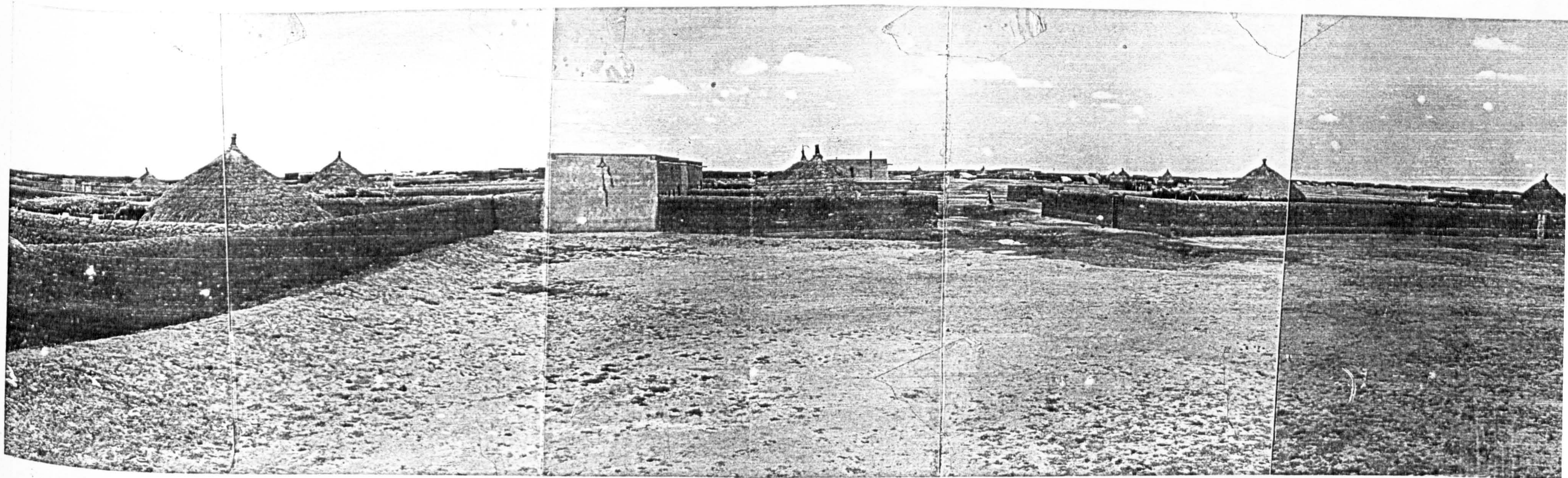


Plate 7.20.



Plate 7.21.

Plate 7.22.

Plates 7.23., 7.24. and 7.25. (below and on the next page) The poor Beja who live in Banat south and the New Halanga, and those who can not afford to build mud boundary walls around their housing plots, try to ensure privacy inside the rooms of their houses by enclosing the sheds built in front of these rooms by rags, scrap metal and straw mats.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.23.

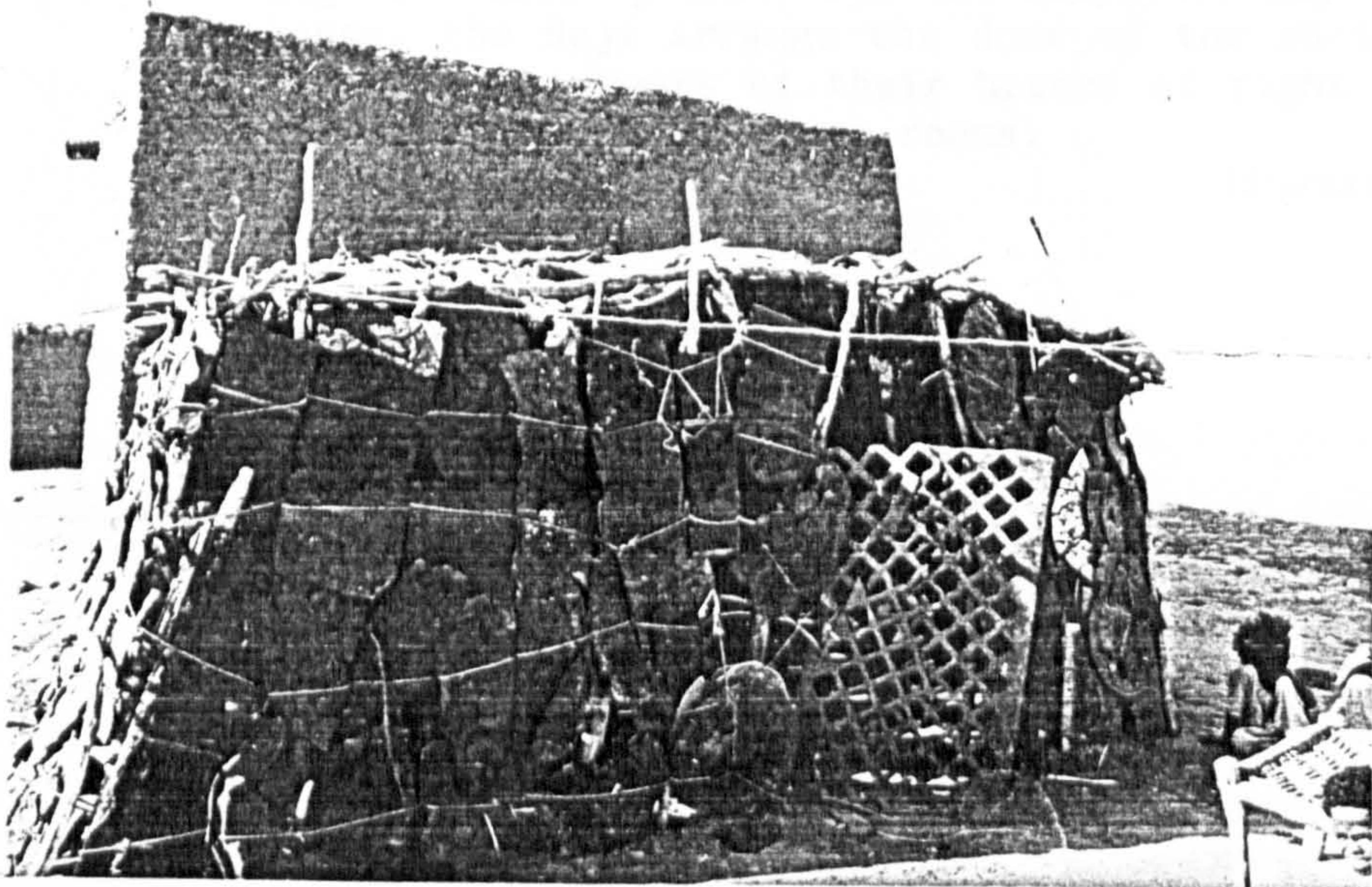


Plate 7.24.

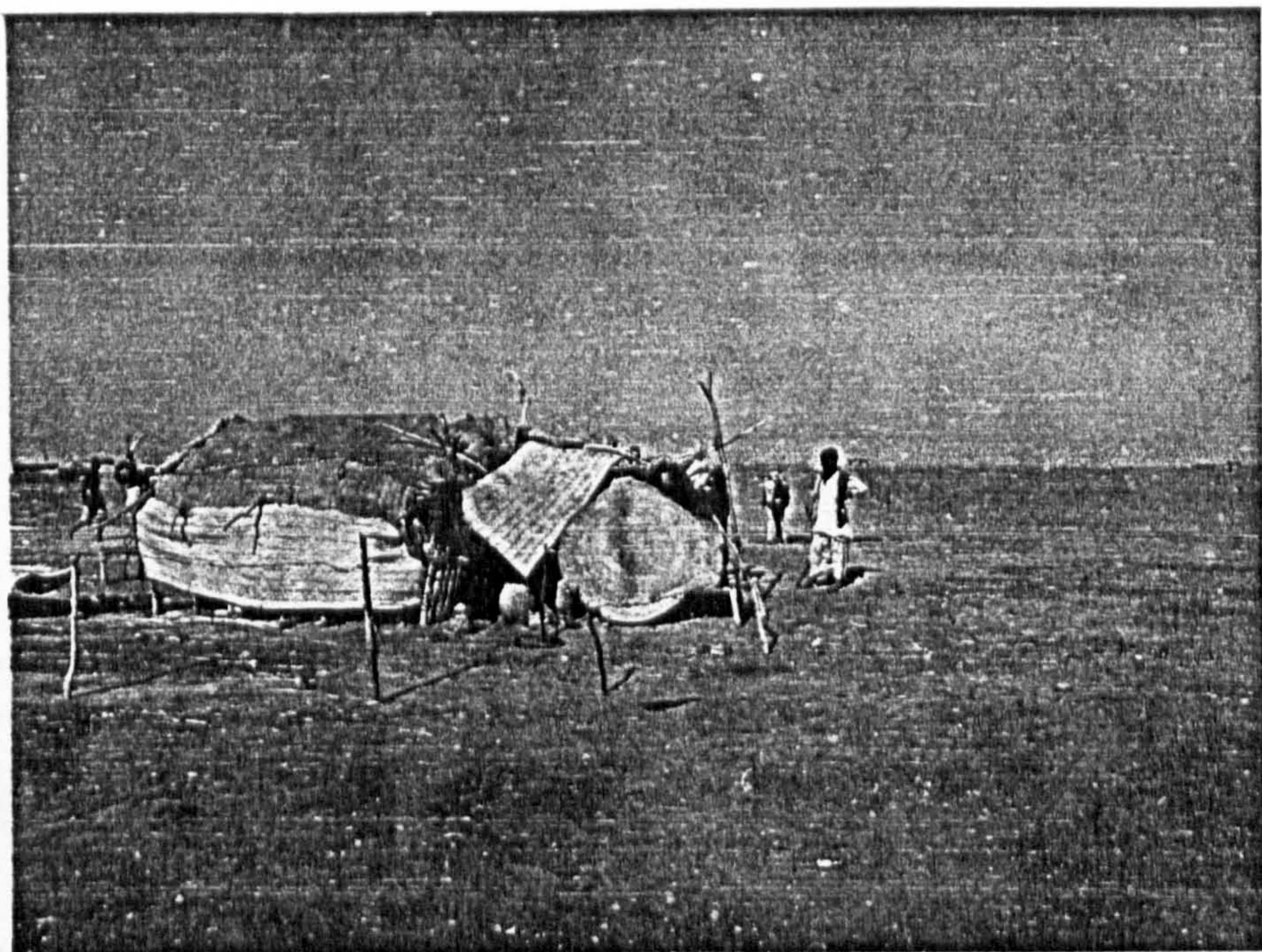


Plate 7.25.

Plates 7.26., 7.27 and 7.28. (Below and on the next page) To ensure high levels of privacy for the couple living inside the house, the Beja arrange the door of the shed built in front of the rooms of their houses at right angles to the door leading to these rooms.

(Source: the author)

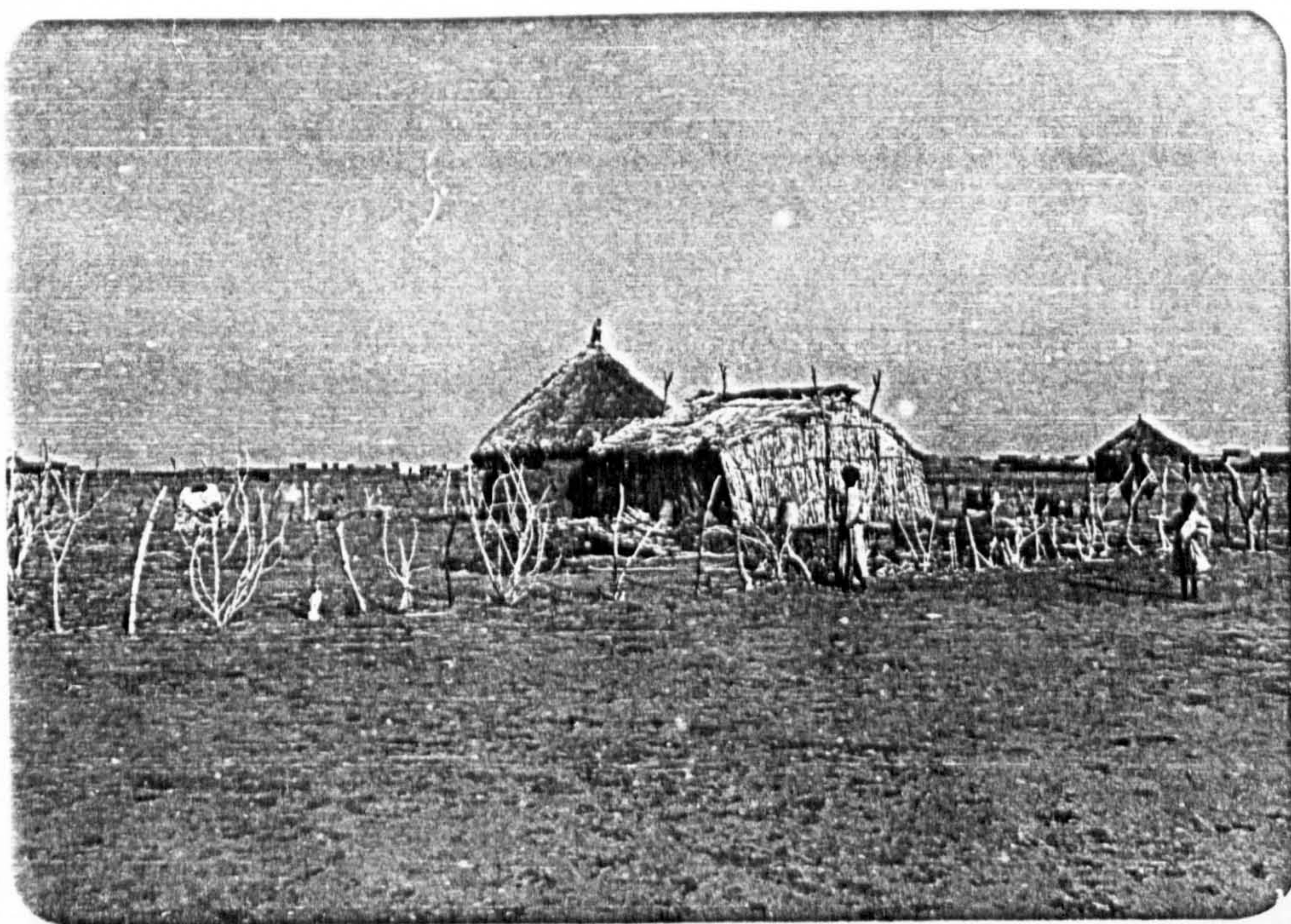


Plate 7.26.

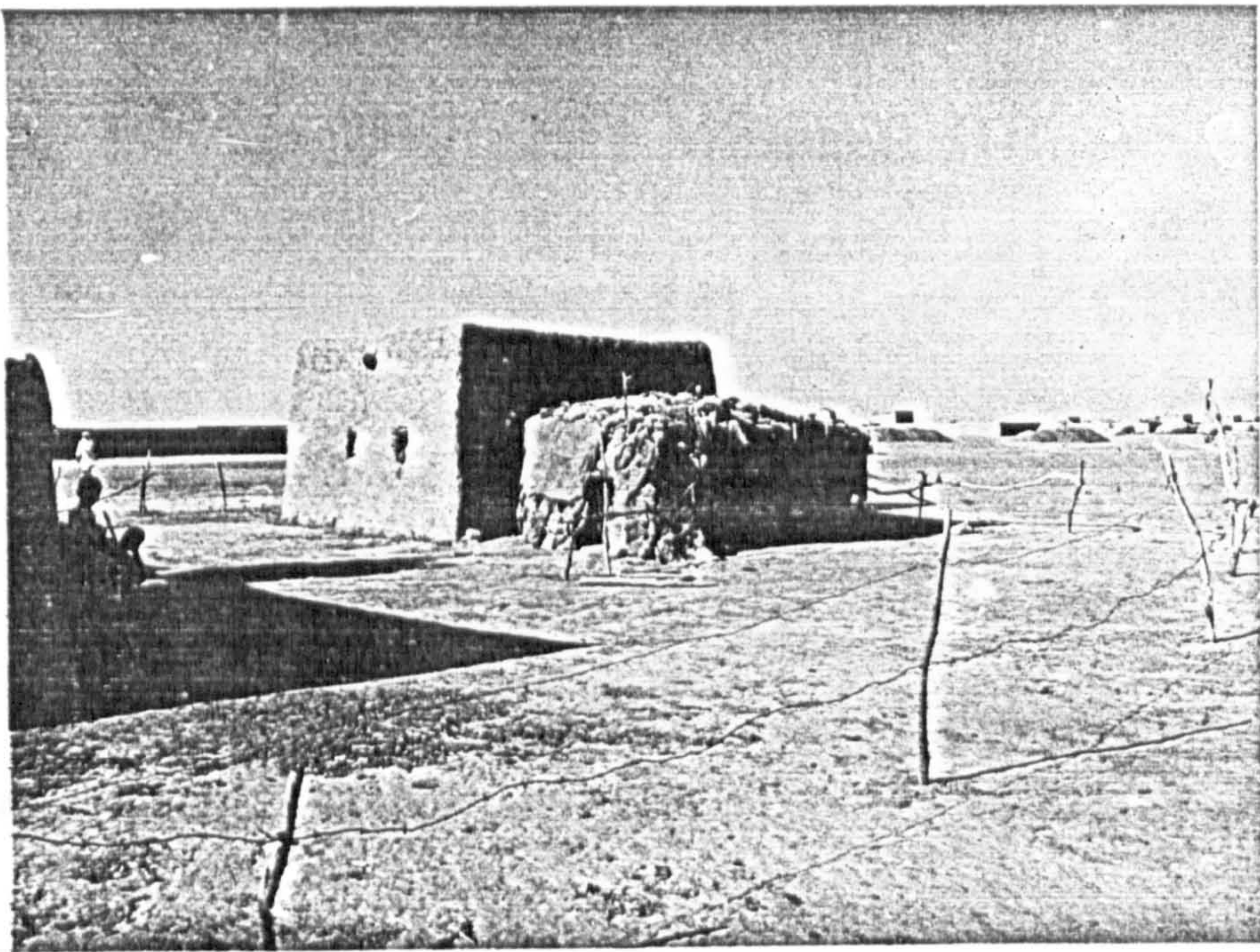


Plate 7.27.

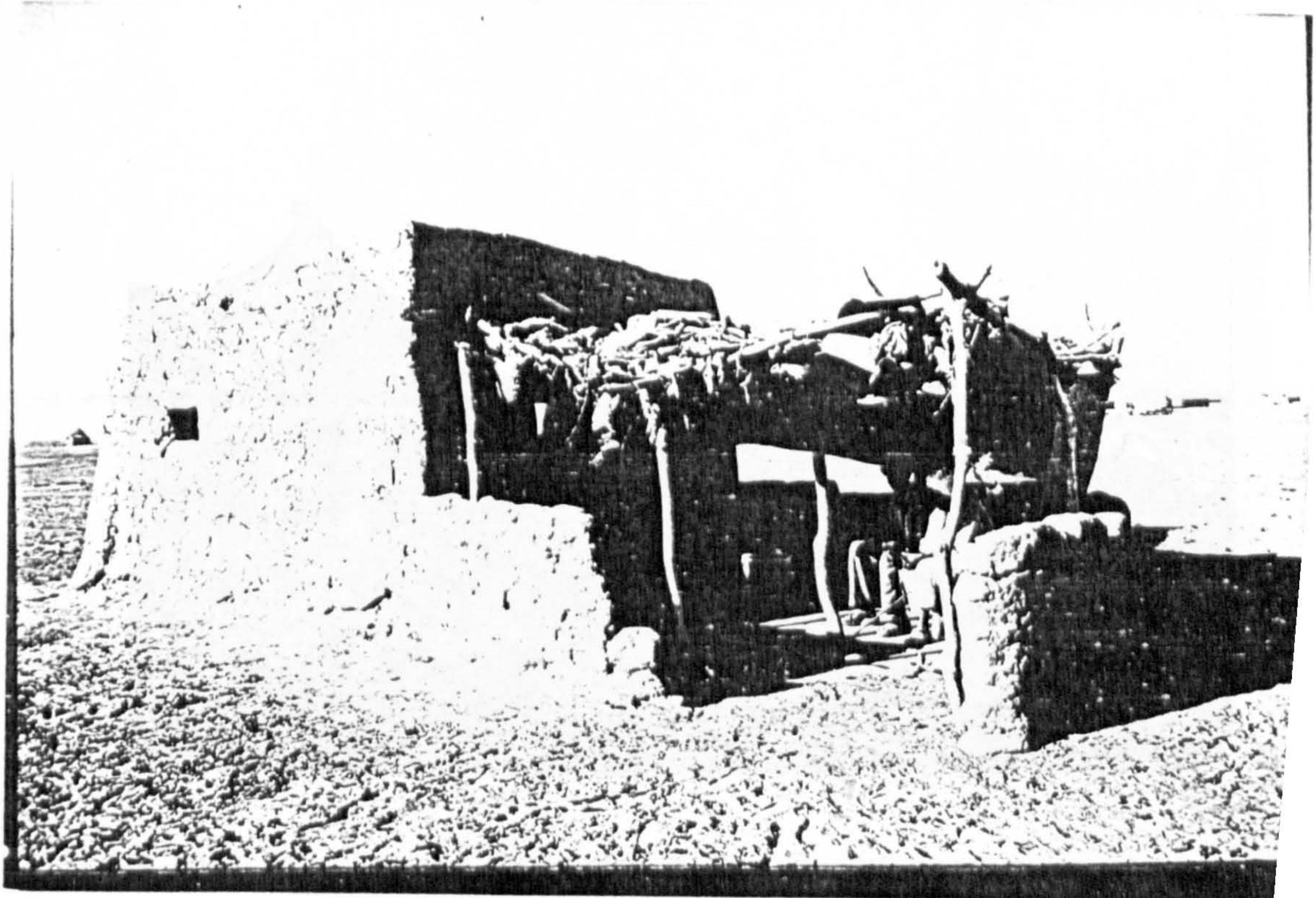


Plate 7.28.



Plates 7.29., 7.30. and 7.31. (above, below and on the next page)
The huts in which the Beja live in urban areas in
Kassala have small windows.

(Source: the author)

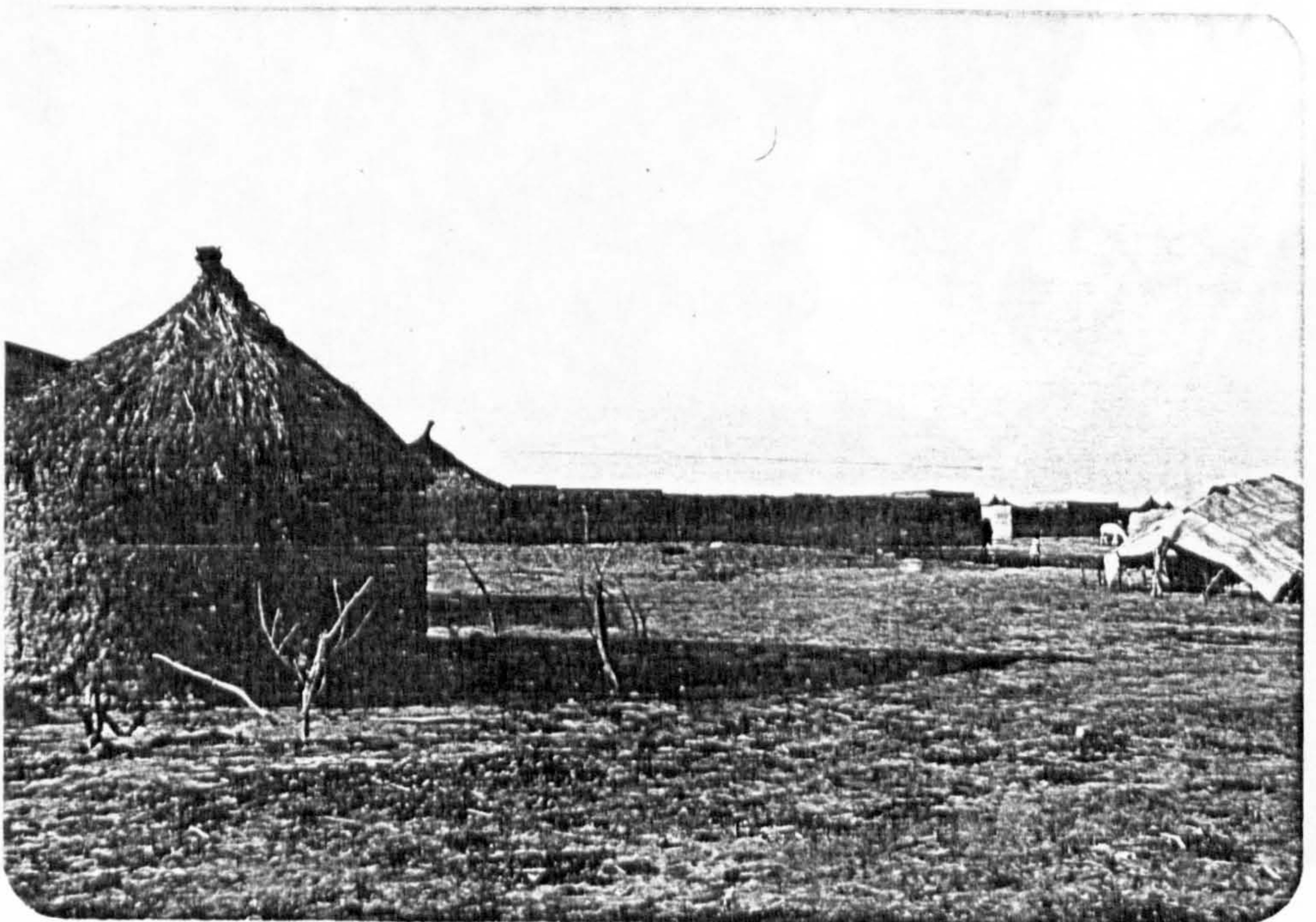
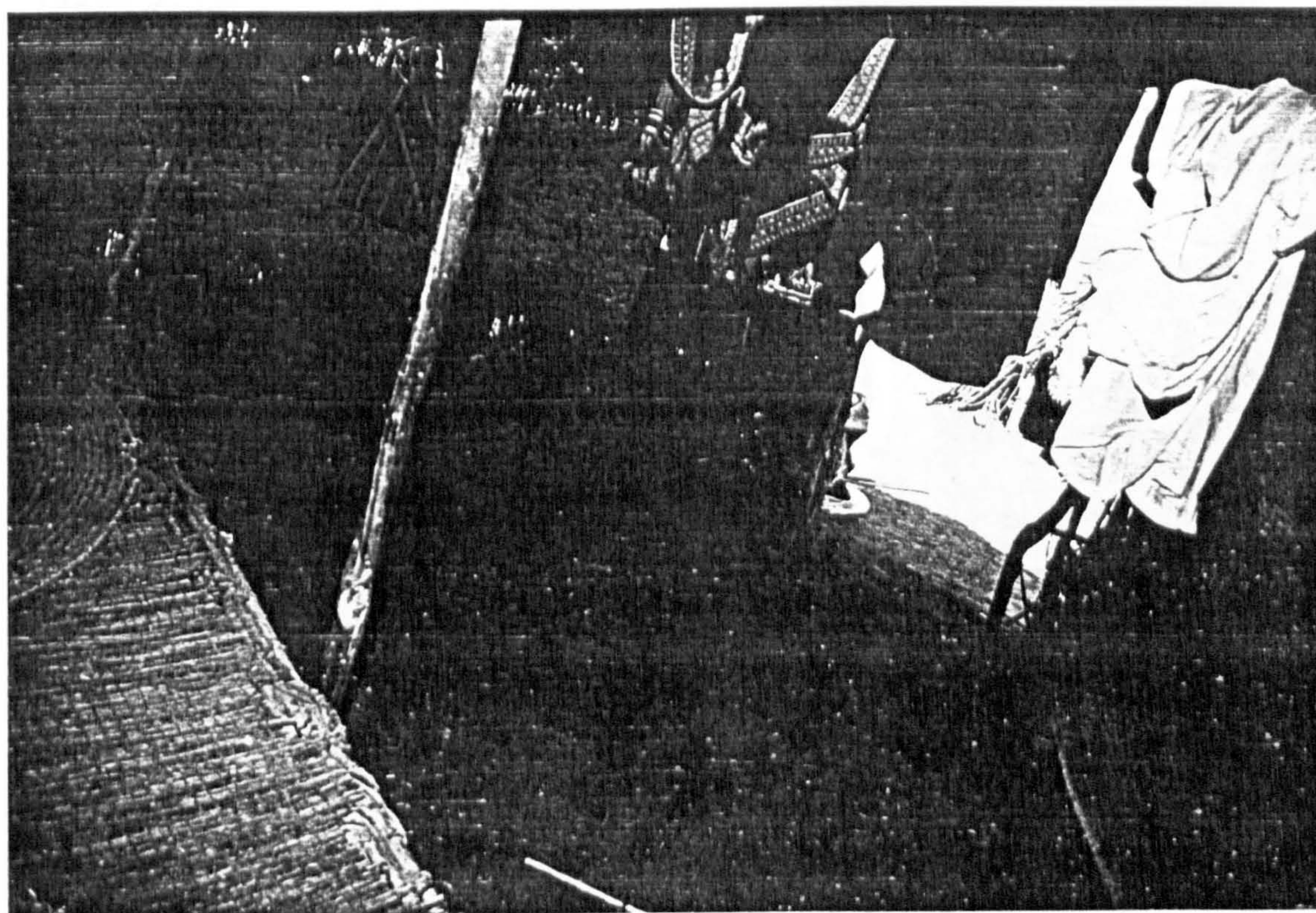


Plate 7.30.



Plate 7.31.



Plates 7.32. and 7.33. (above and on the next page) To ensure high levels of privacy inside the rooms of their houses, the Beja screen off the small windows by woollen cloth.

(Source: the author)

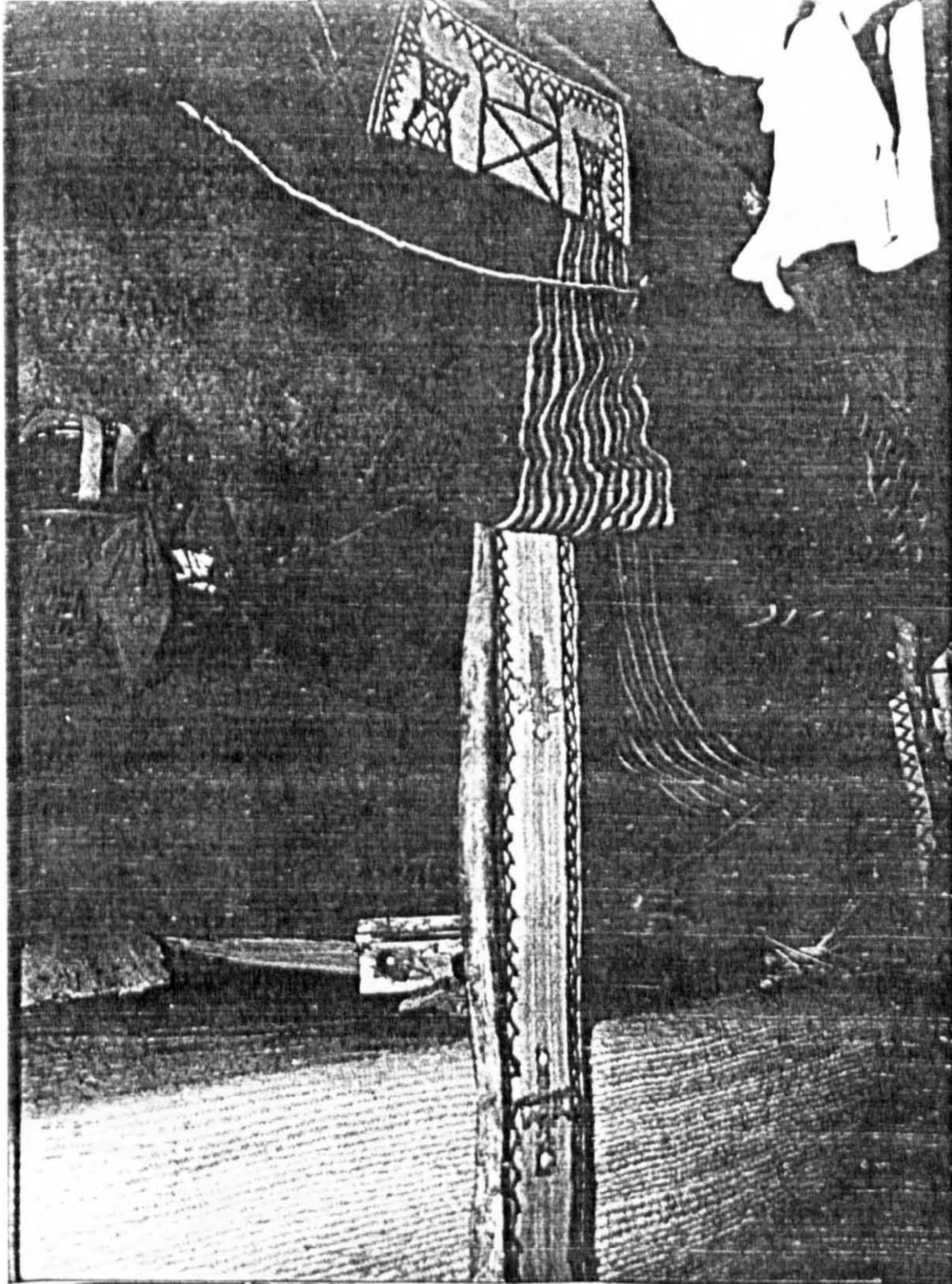


Plate 7.33.



Plates 7.34. to 7.39. (On the three next pages) Inside the various kinds of rooms and huts in which the Beja live in urban areas in Kassala the bed and floor mat are still located in the same place which it occupies in the nomadic tents of the tribe.

(Source: the author)

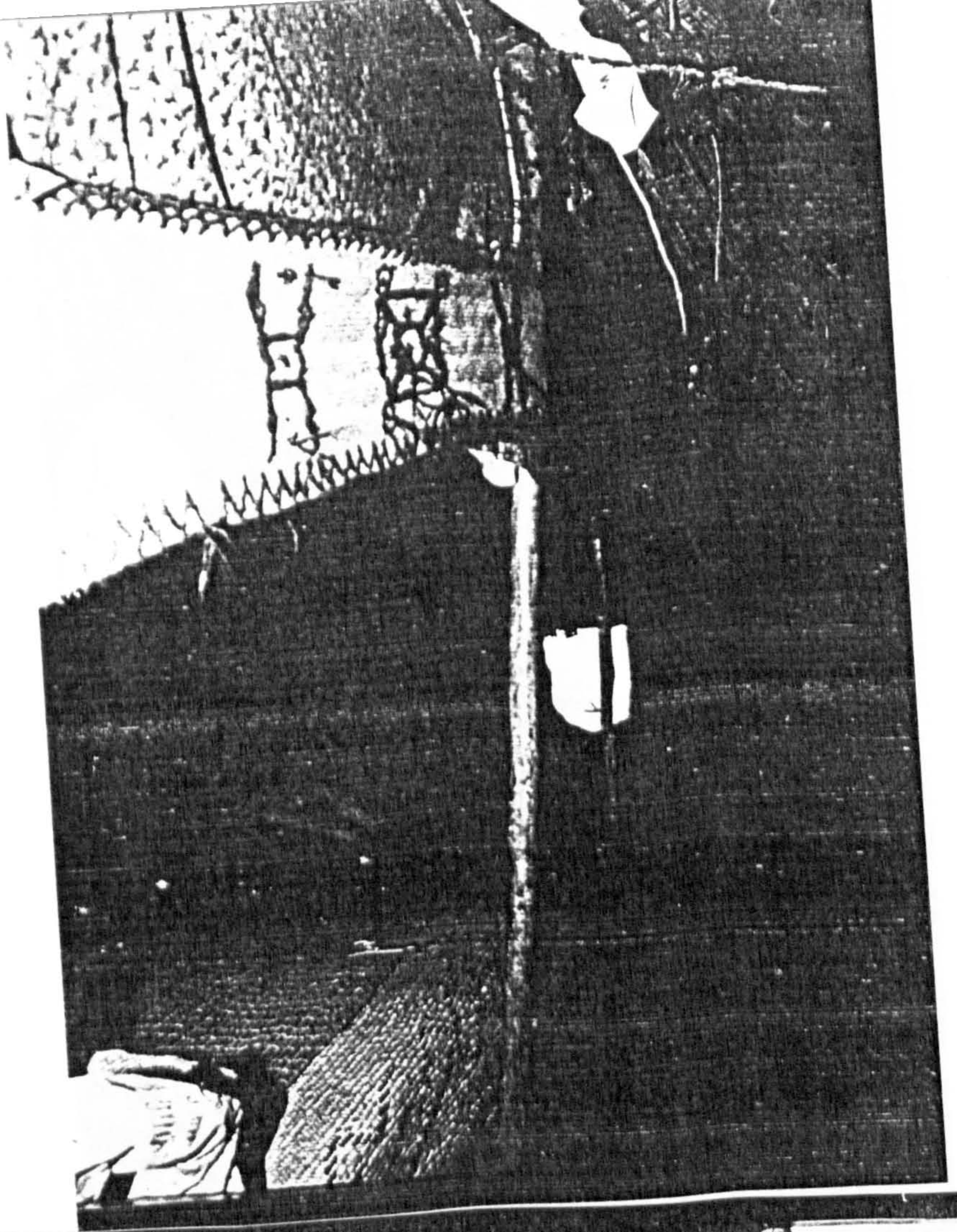


Plate 7.34.



Plate 7.35.

Plate 7.36.



Plate 7.37.

Plate 7.38.

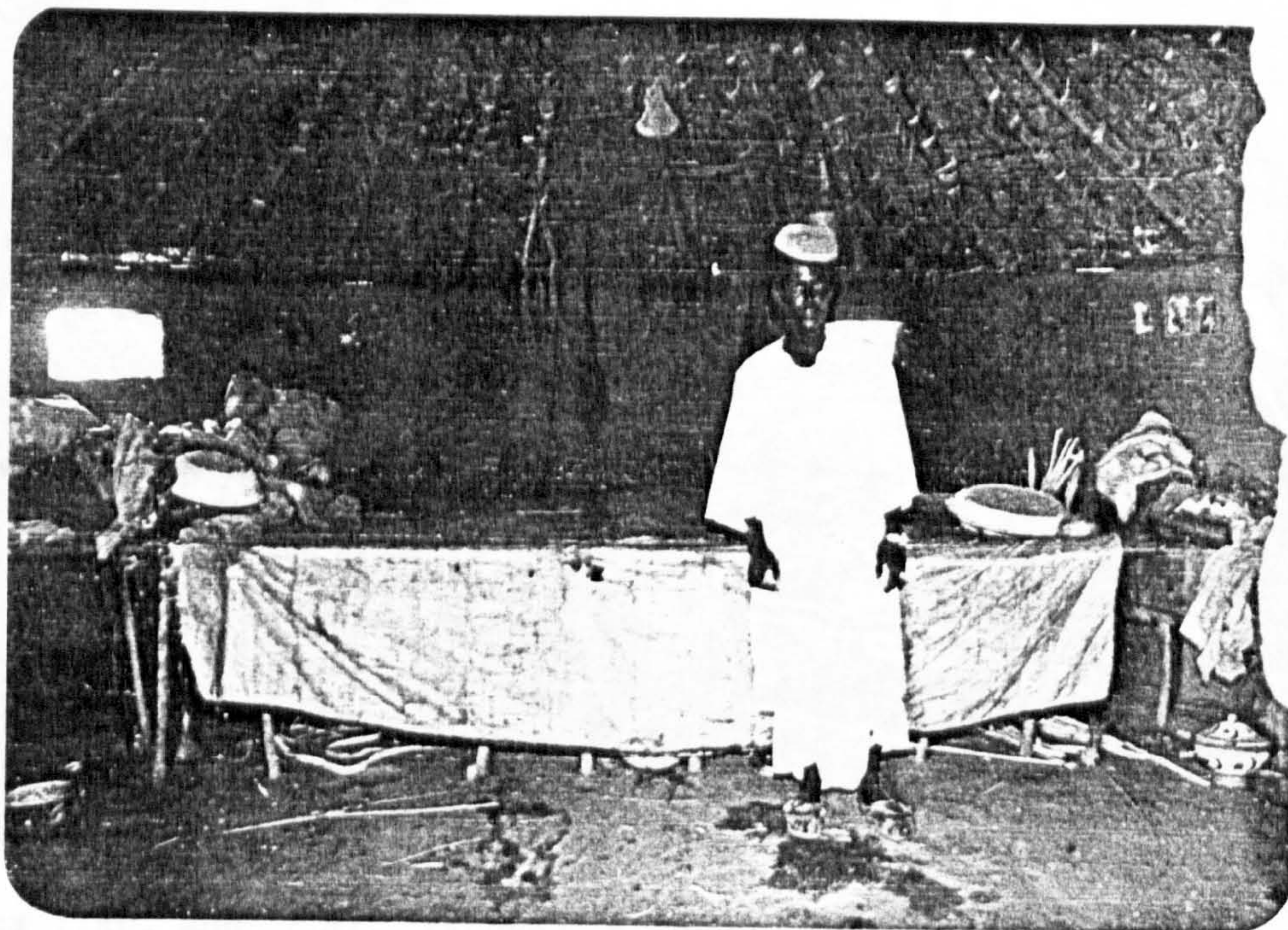
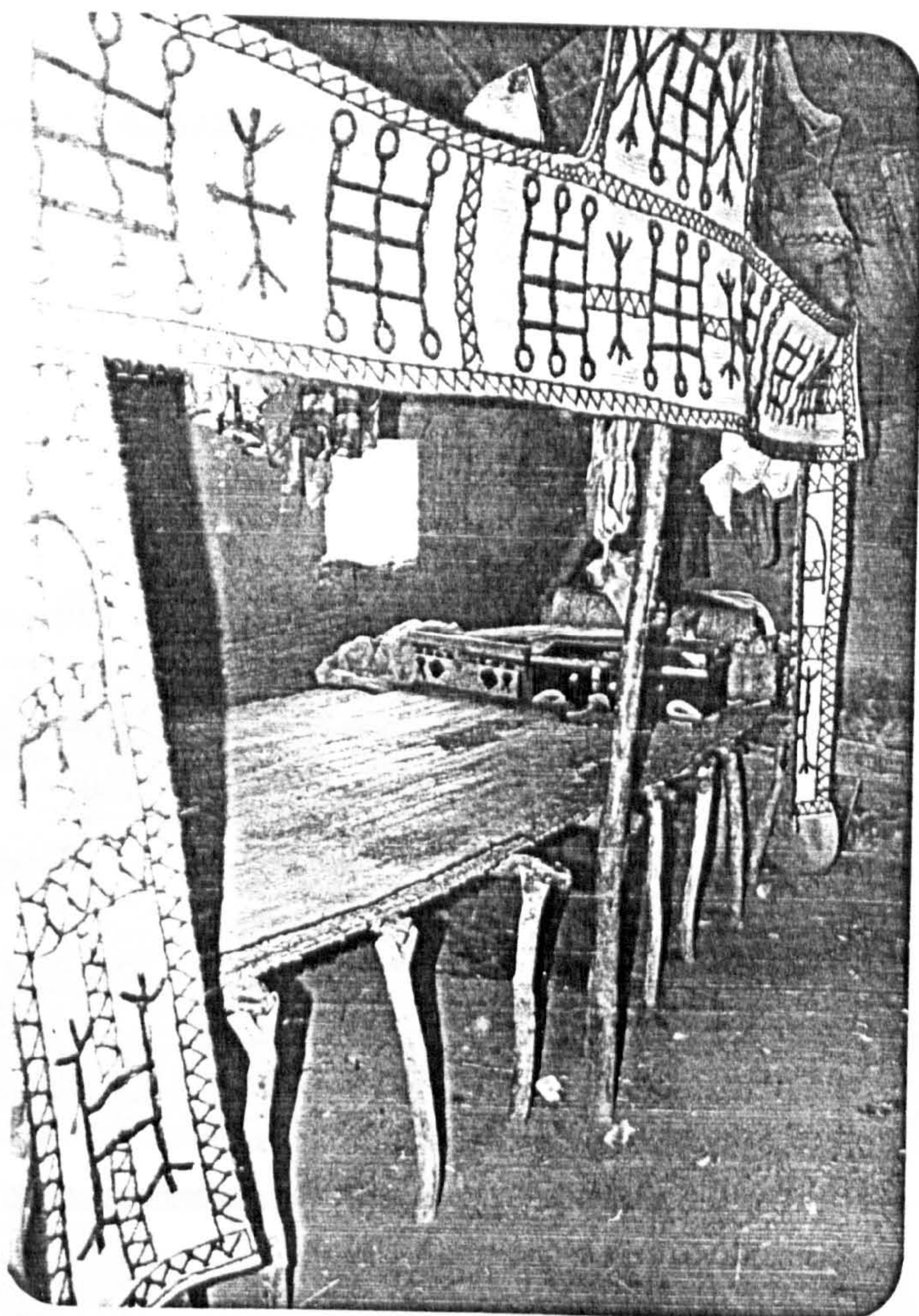
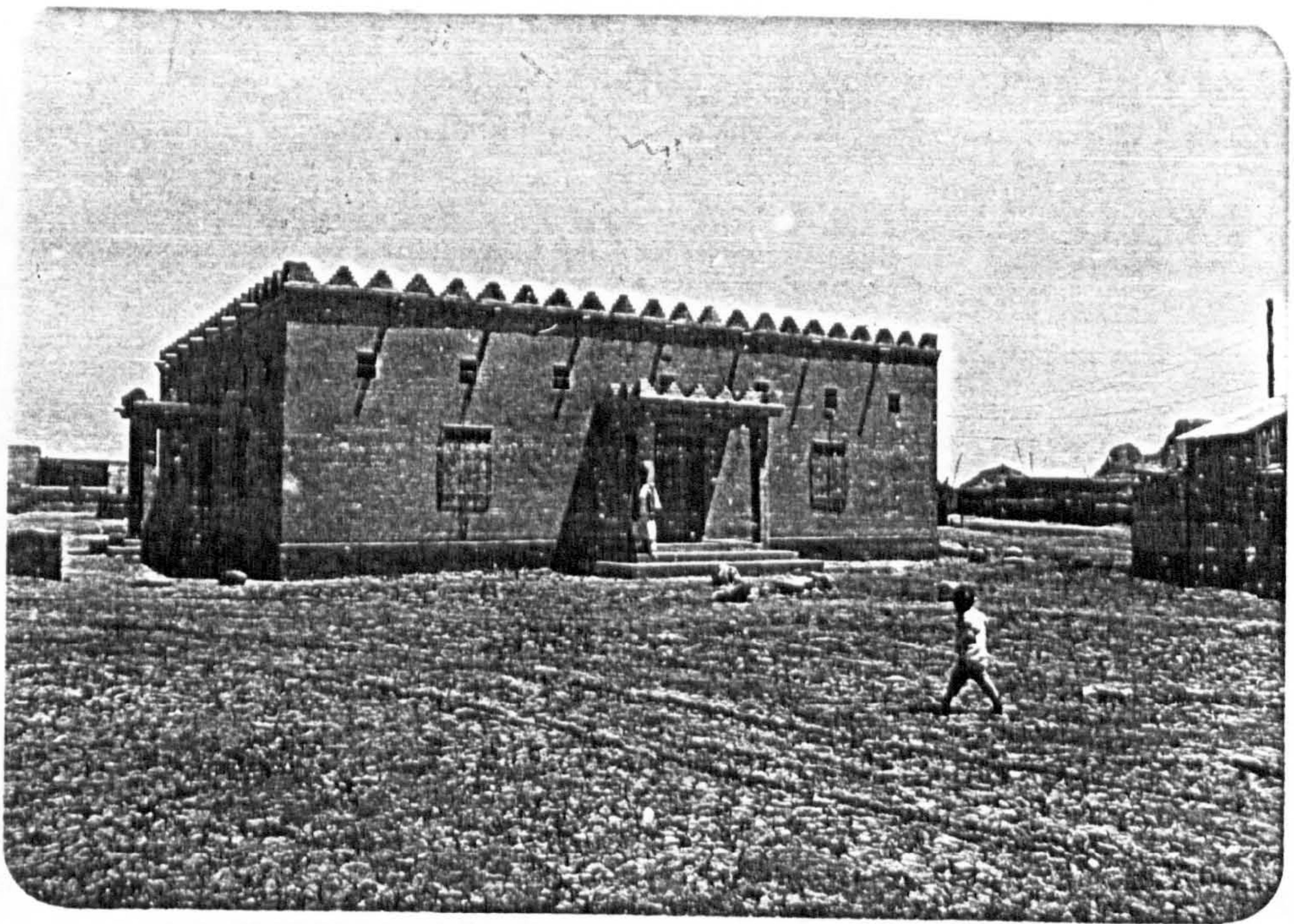


Plate 7.39.



Plates 7.40. and 7.41. (above) A group of the Gazaiza Rashaidaa branch has been illegally settling for about forty years in a public open space in Kassala located between housing areas and an industrial area.

(Source: the author)



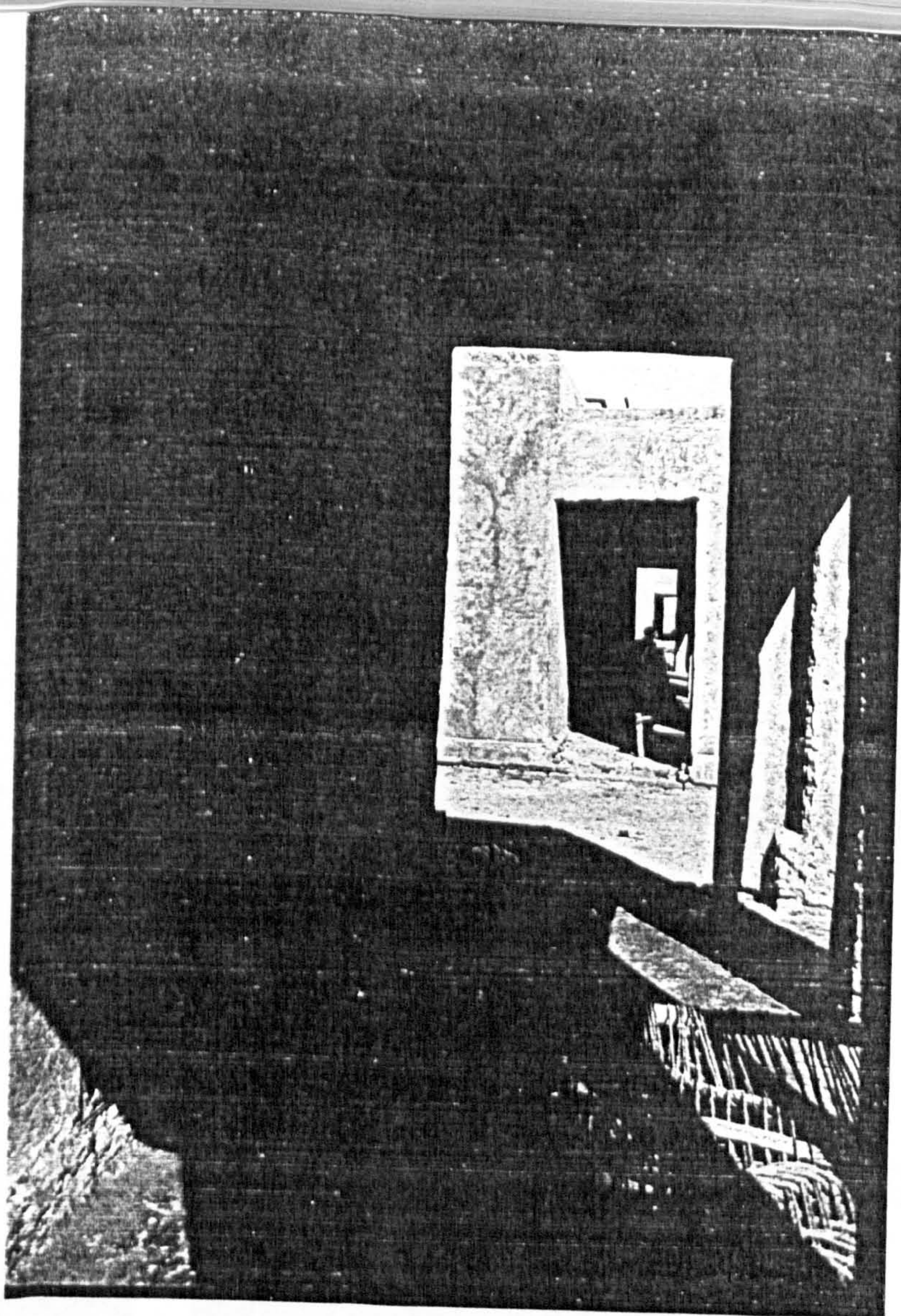
Plates 7.42. and 7.43. (above) Mastura mosque which is built in the central area of public facilities.

(Source: the author)



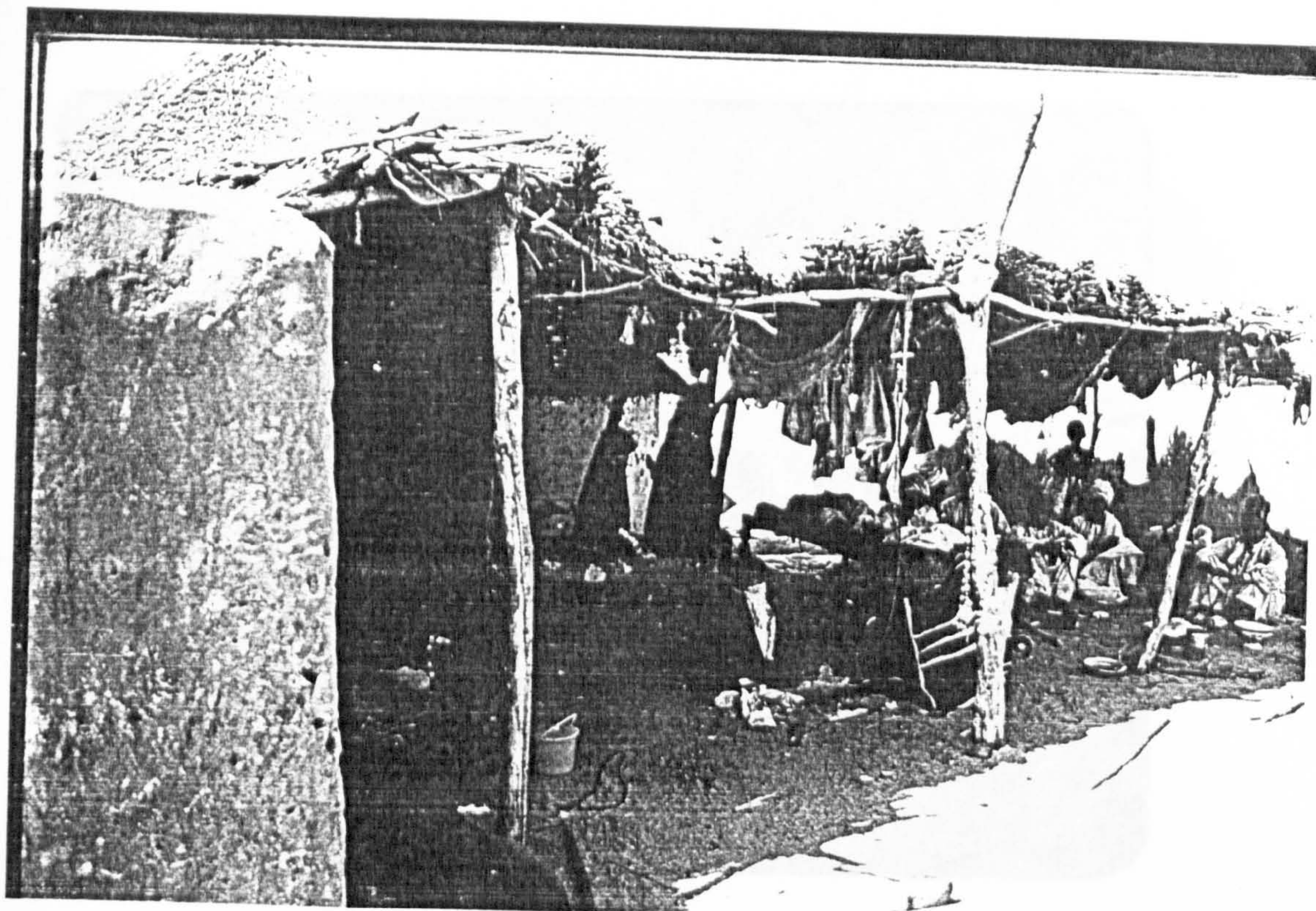
Plates 7.44. and 7.45. (above) The customers who eat in the restaurants which are opened in kiosks in Mastura market-place are mostly from non-Rashaidaa construction workers and mechanics.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.46. and 7.47. (above) Few people gather during daytime in the arcades of Mastura market-place.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.48. and 7.49. (above) The Rashaidaa men usually spend the day in the house with their families where they also receive the guests of the household.

(Source: the author)

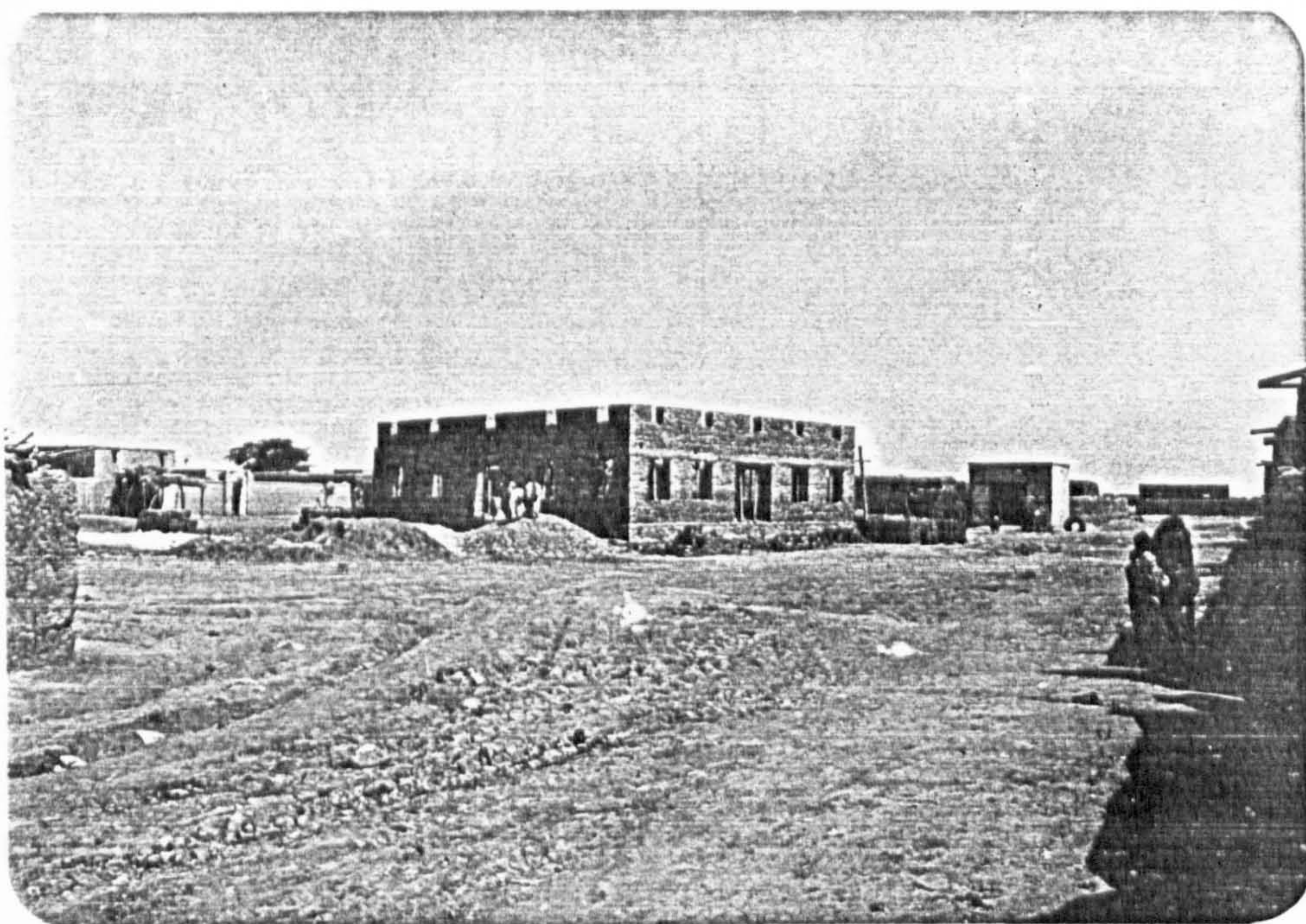


Plate 7.50. A big mosque being constructed in a secondary public open space in Mansoura.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.51. Rashaidaa men in Mansoura celebrating a wedding party taking place in the road located in front of the house of family organizing the occasion.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.52. The corner shop in the Rashaidaa housing areas is not considered a centre of public social life.

(Source: the author)

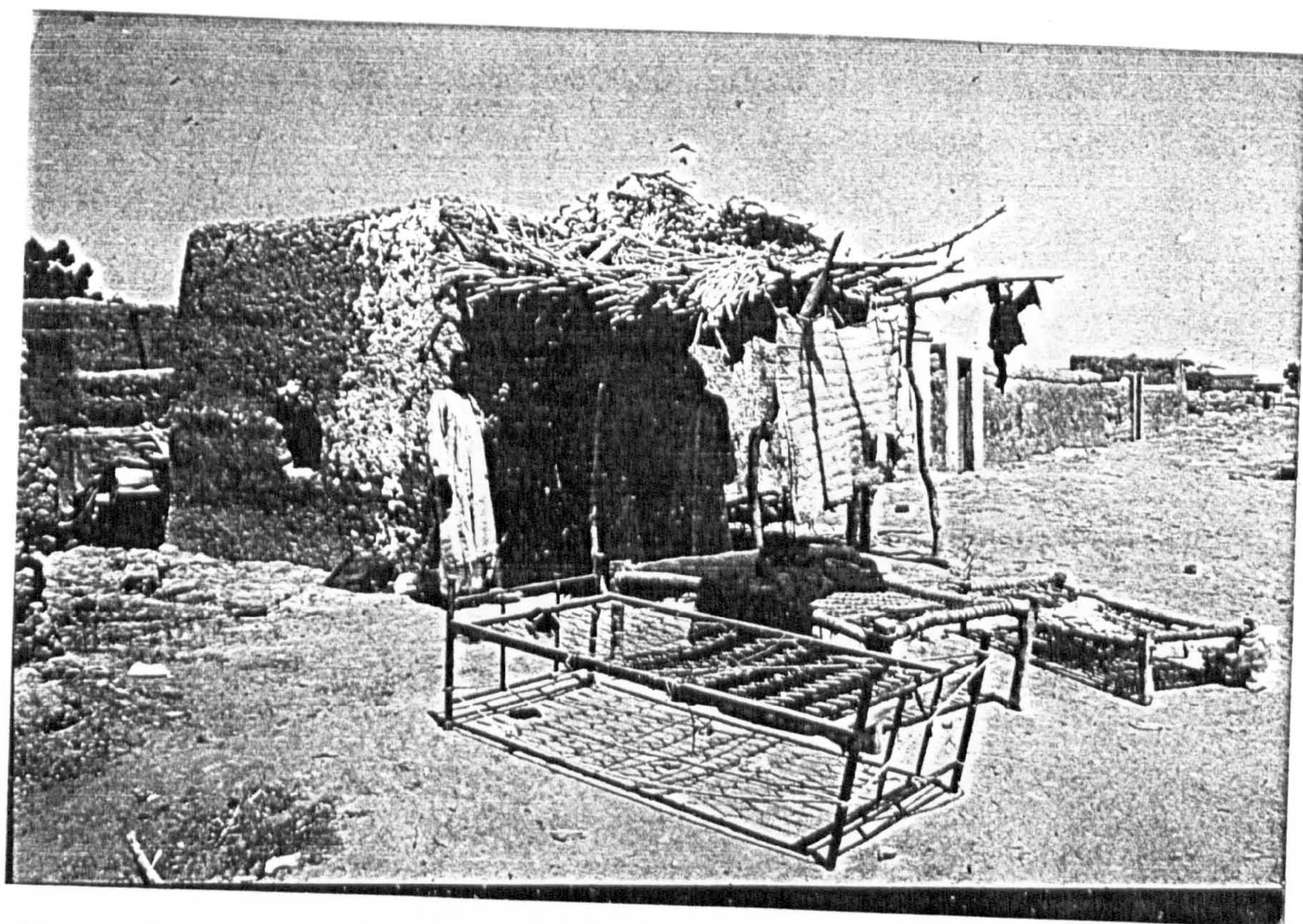


Plate 7.53. A corner shop opened in a housing plot in Mansoura is connected by a verandah to the courtyard of the house.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.54. and 7.55. (above) A room in a housing plot in Mansoura licensed as a corner shop is used as a house and inhabited by a Rashidaa family.

(Source: the author)

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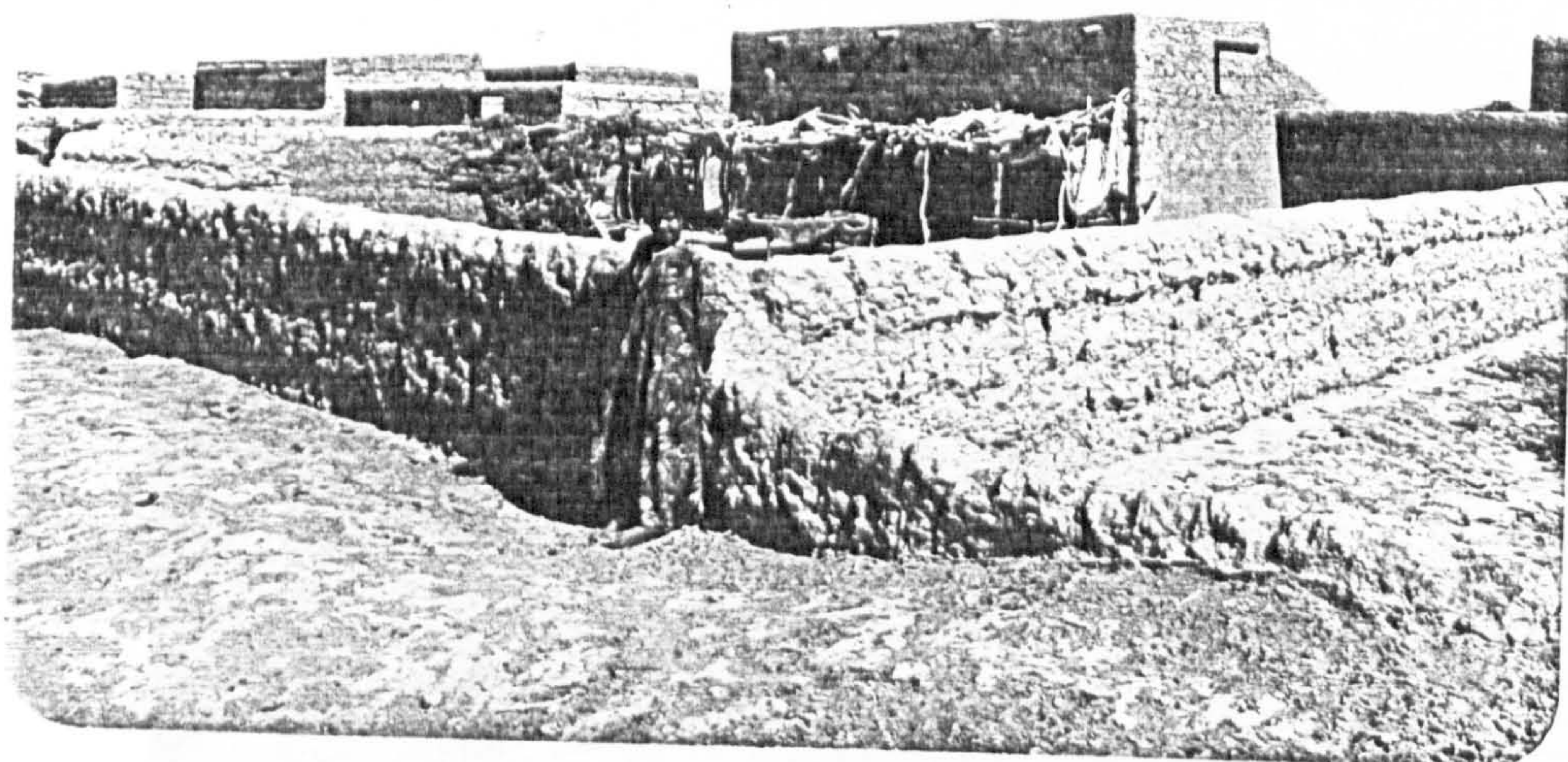


Plate 5.57.

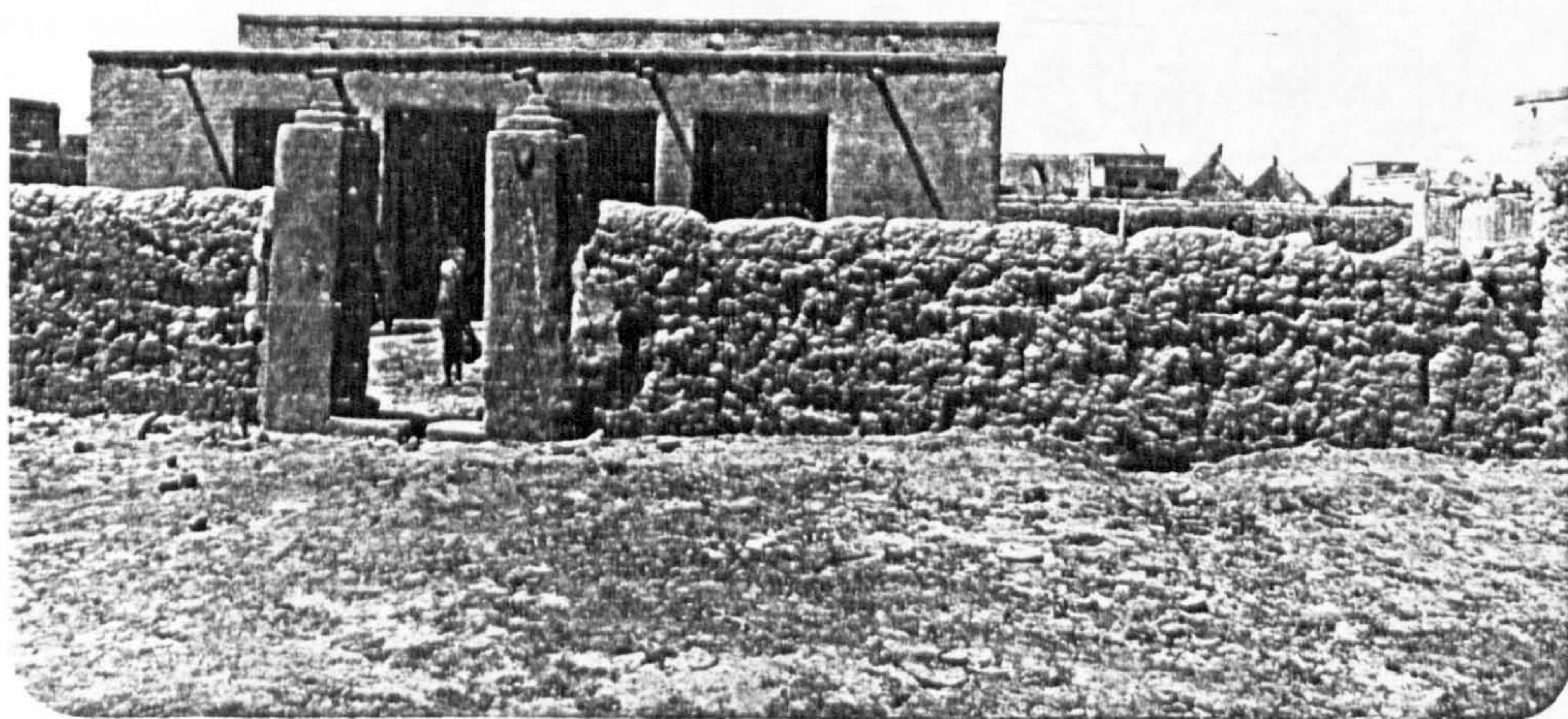


Plate 5.58.

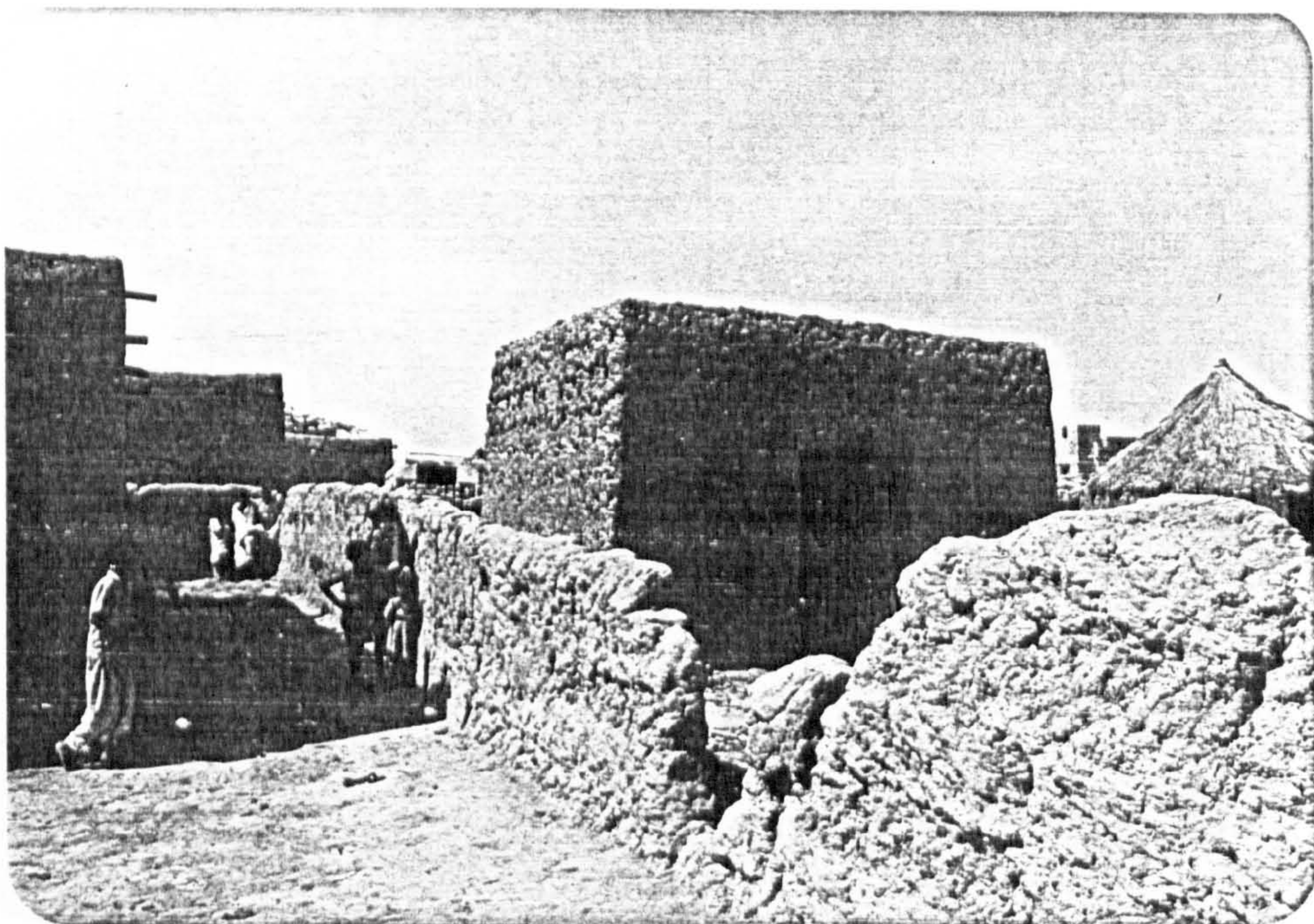


Plate 7.59.

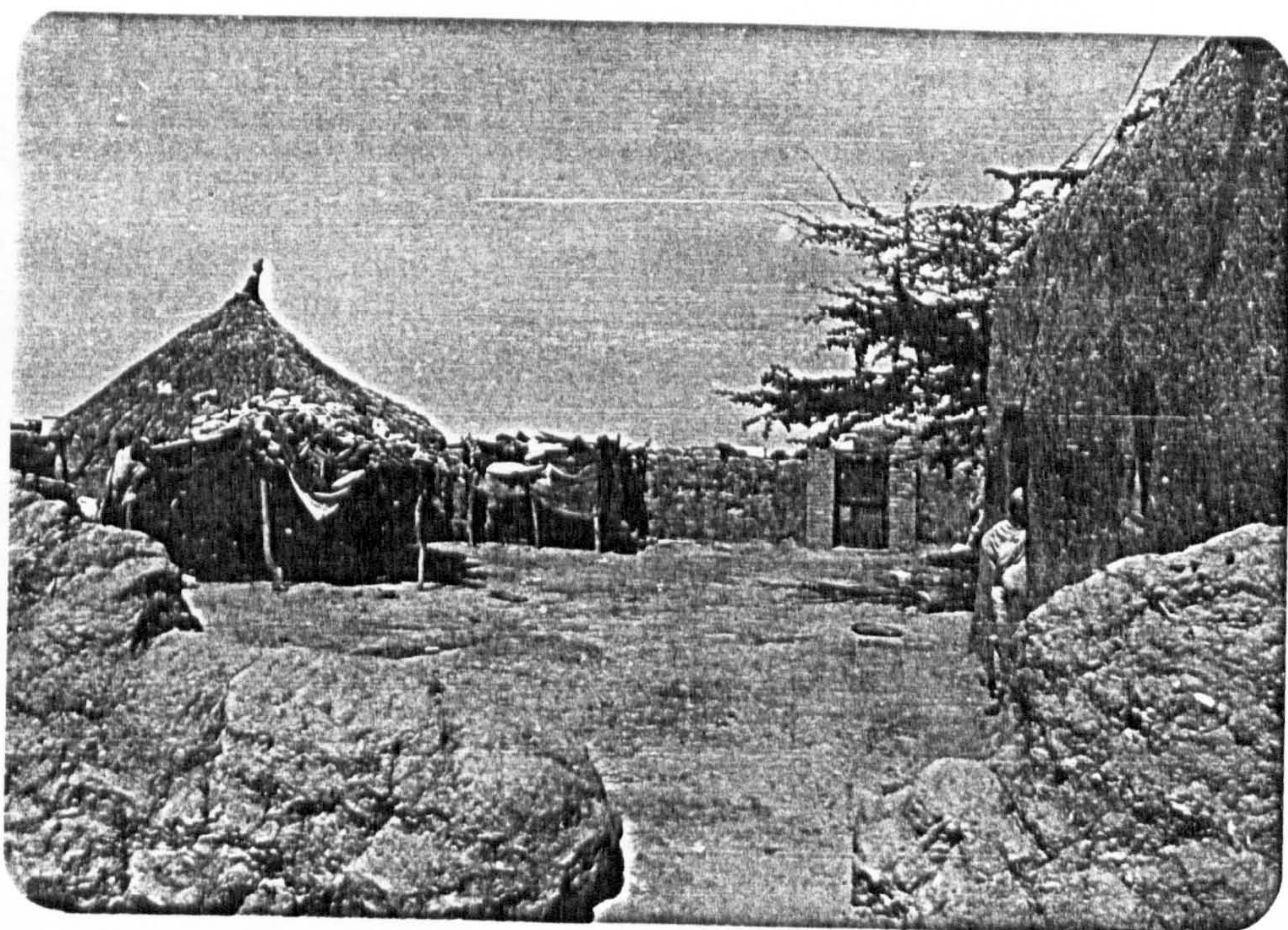


Plate 7.60.

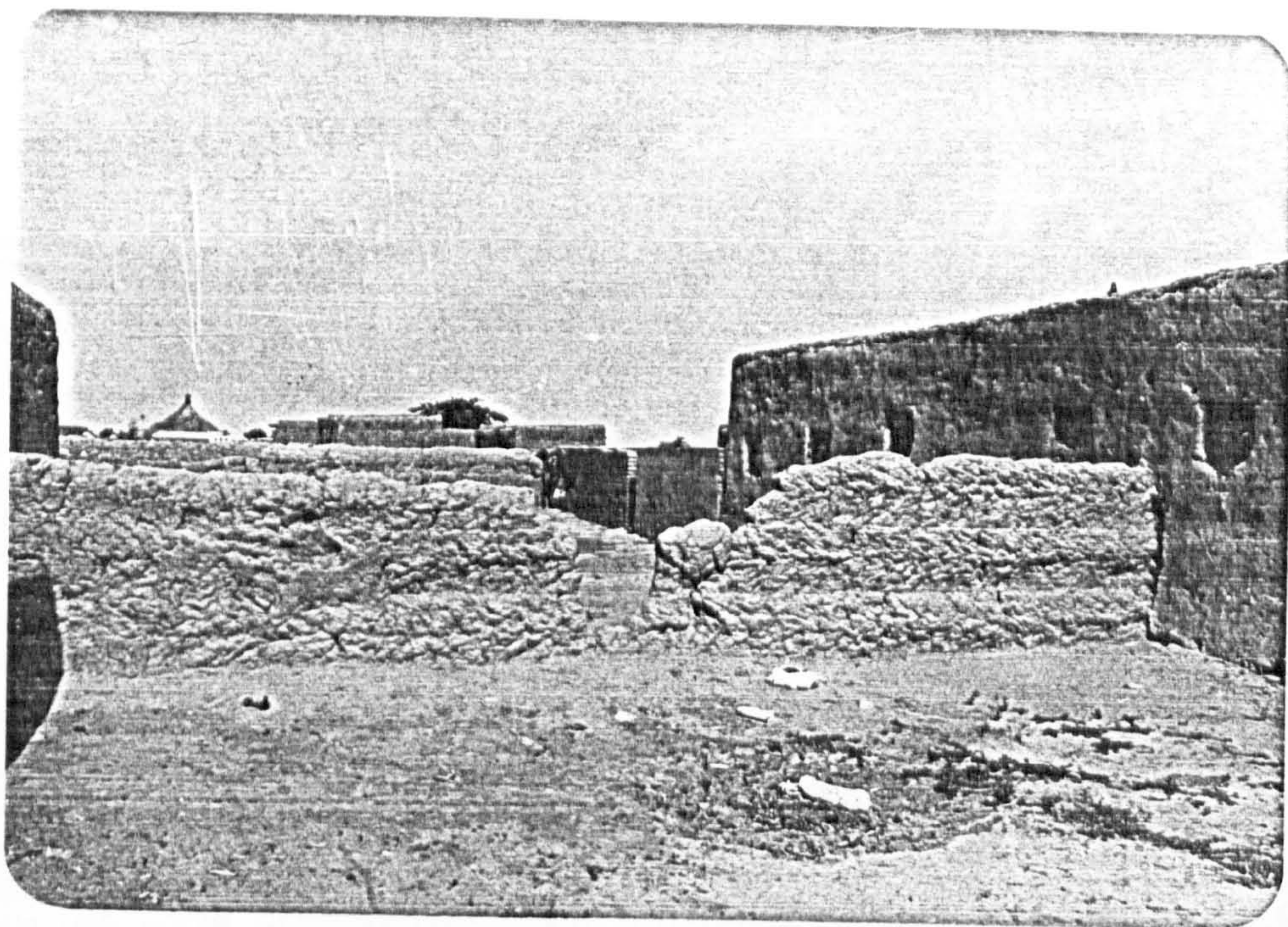
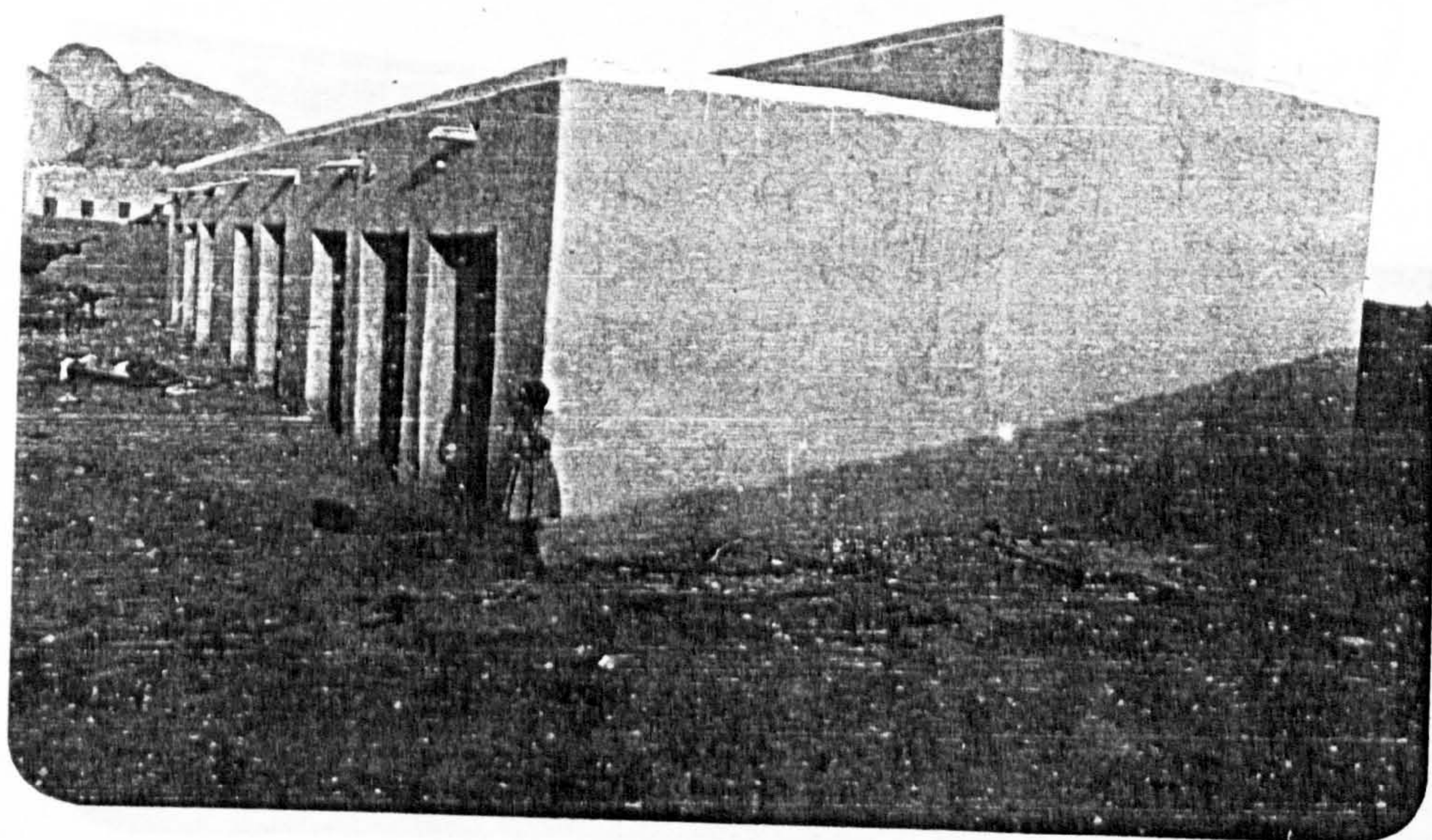


Plate 7.61.



Plate 7.62. In many cases in Mansoura and Mastura, the migrating Rashaidaa families lock their entrance gates by using just a length of string.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.63. and 7.64. (above) An example from Mastura showing how the Rashaidaa amalgamate the adjacent plots allotted to members of the same extended family

(Source: the author)

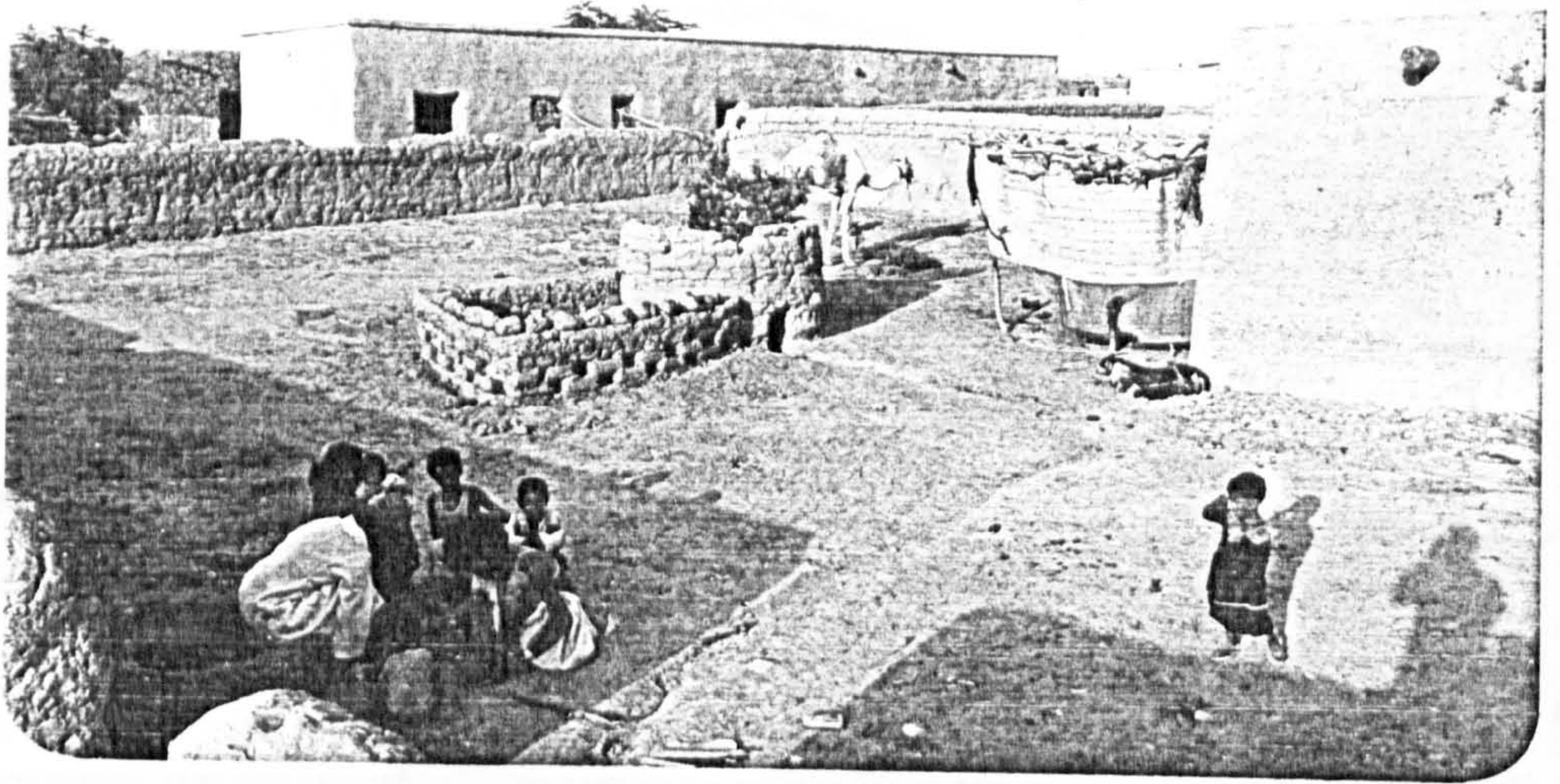


Plate 7.65. Another example from Mansoura showing how the Rashaidaa relate the houses built in adjacent plot in order to ensure visual contact and direct access between the people living in these plots

(Source: the author)

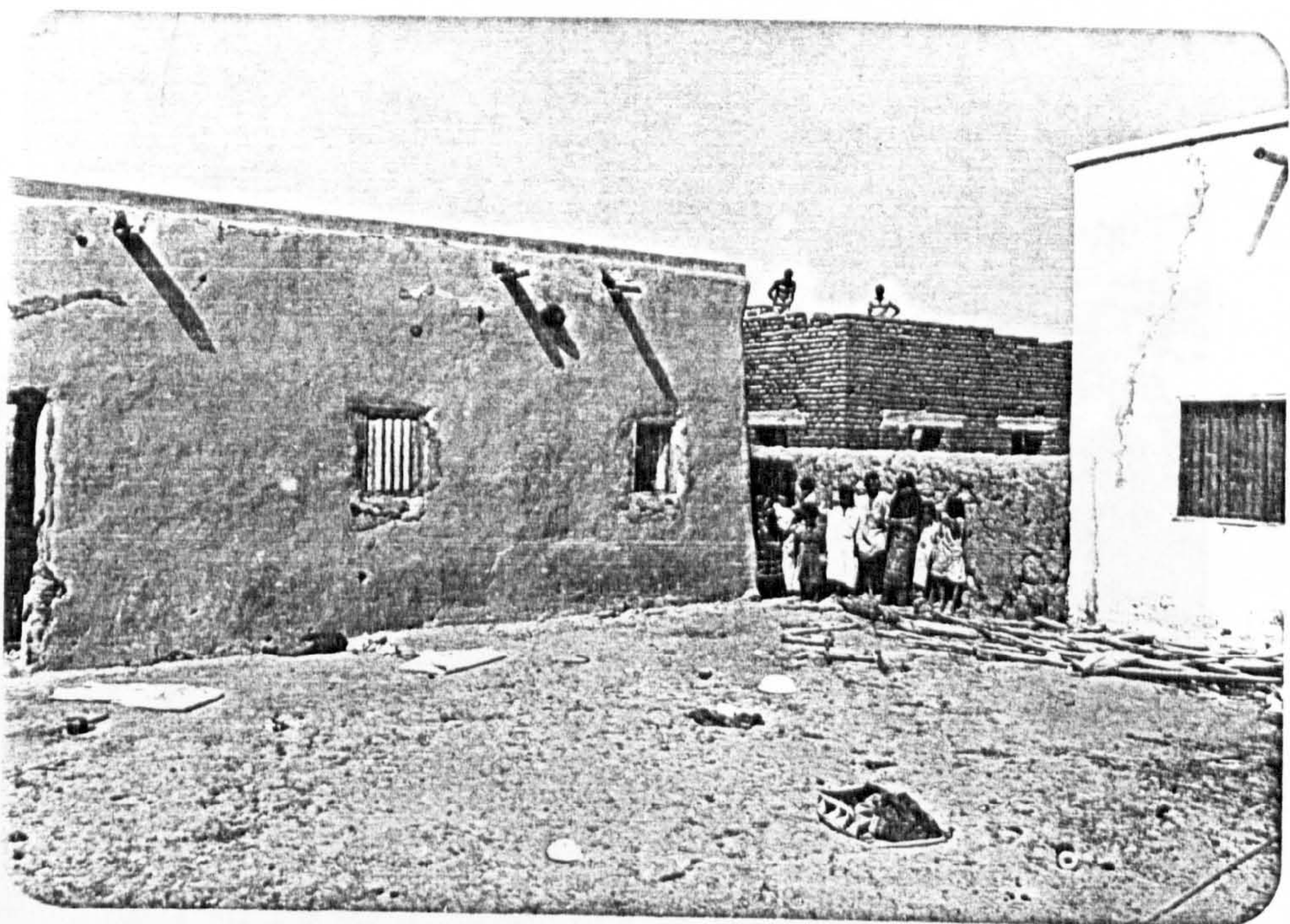
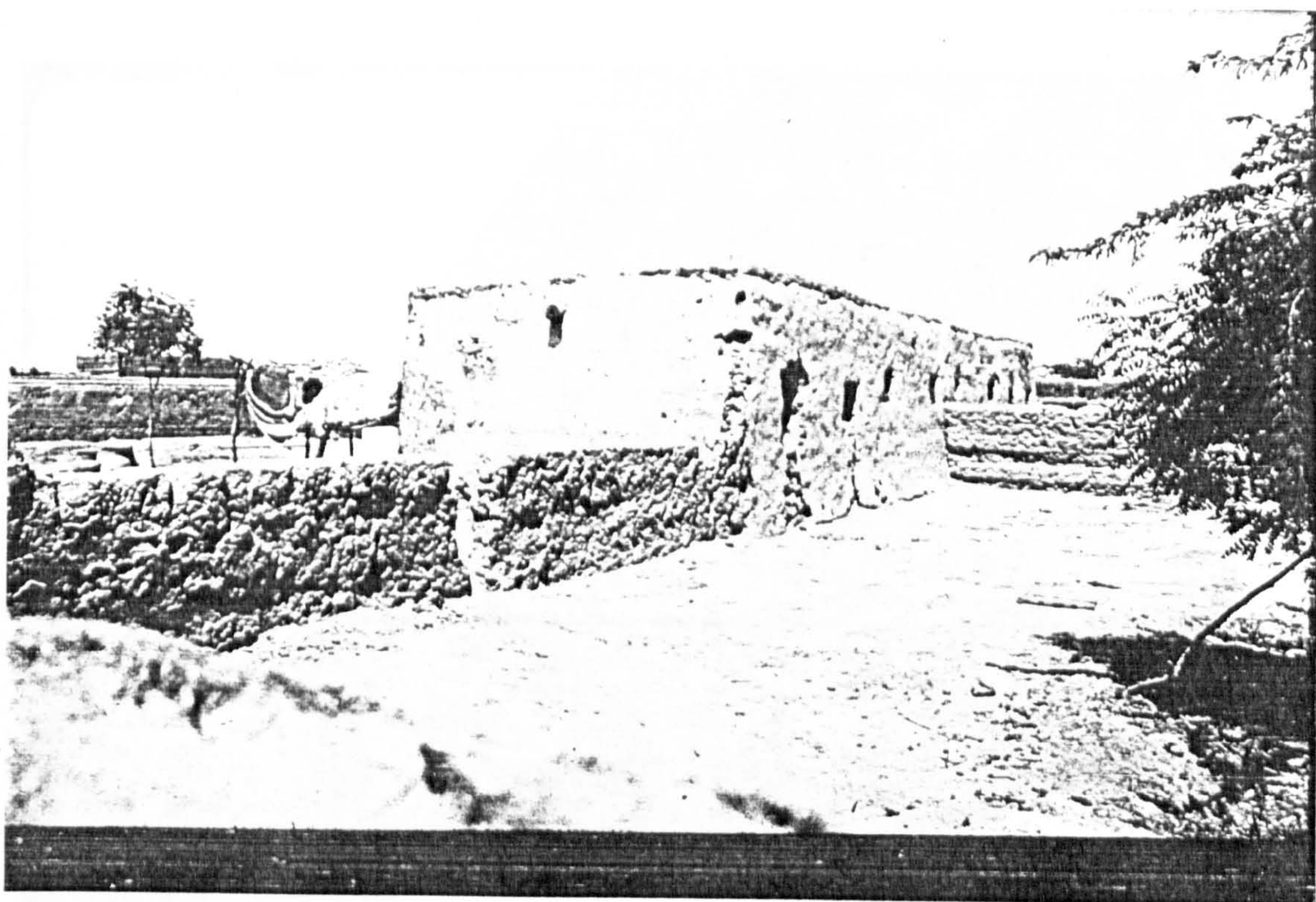


Plate 7.66. To ensure visual contact and direct access between adjacent housing plots, the Rashaidaa sometimes build their houses along a north-south axis

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.67. to 7.71. (on this page and the next two pages) To ensure visual contact between adjacent plots, the Rashaidaa build their houses along the boundary walls separating these plots

(Source: the author)

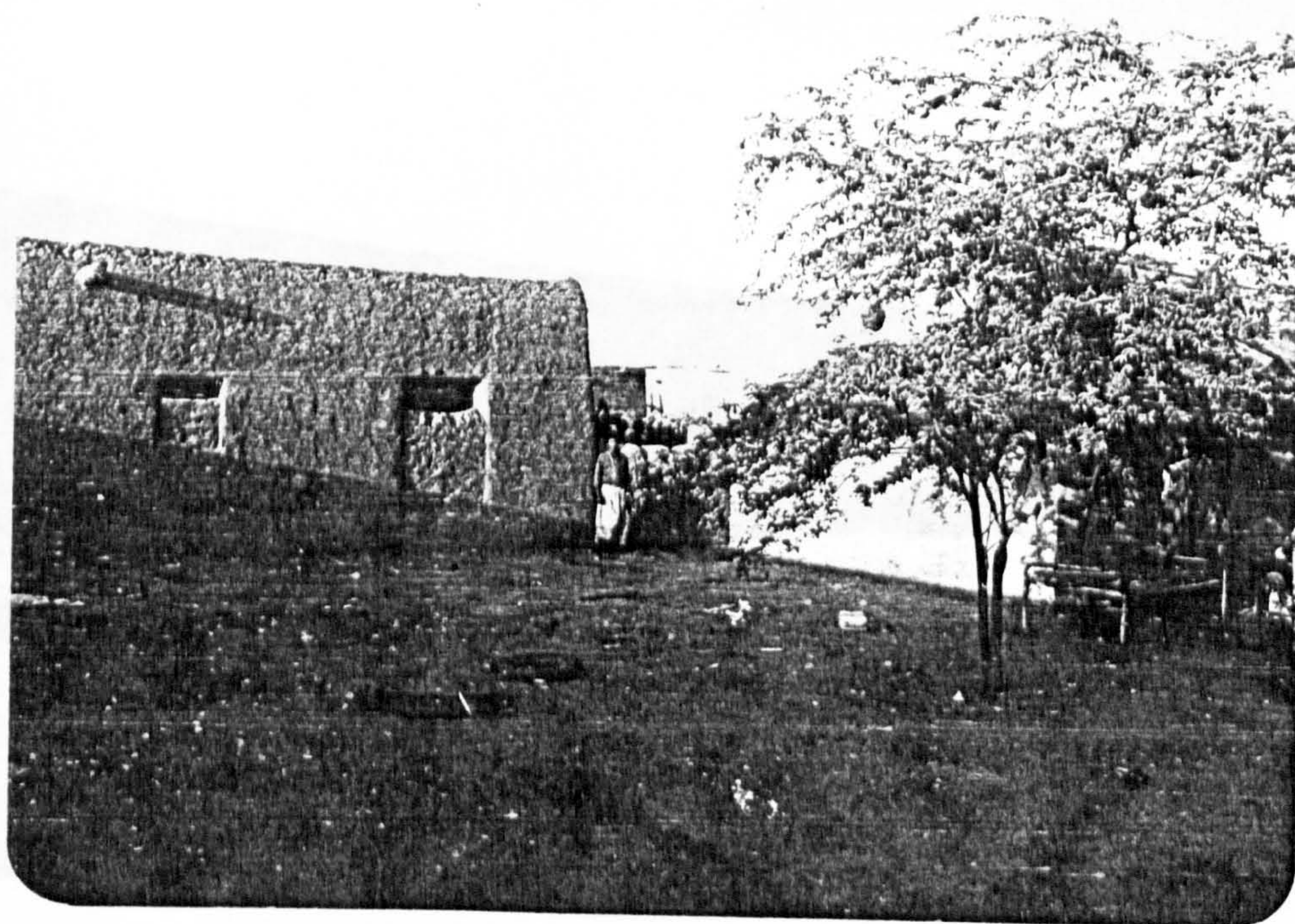


Plate 7.68.

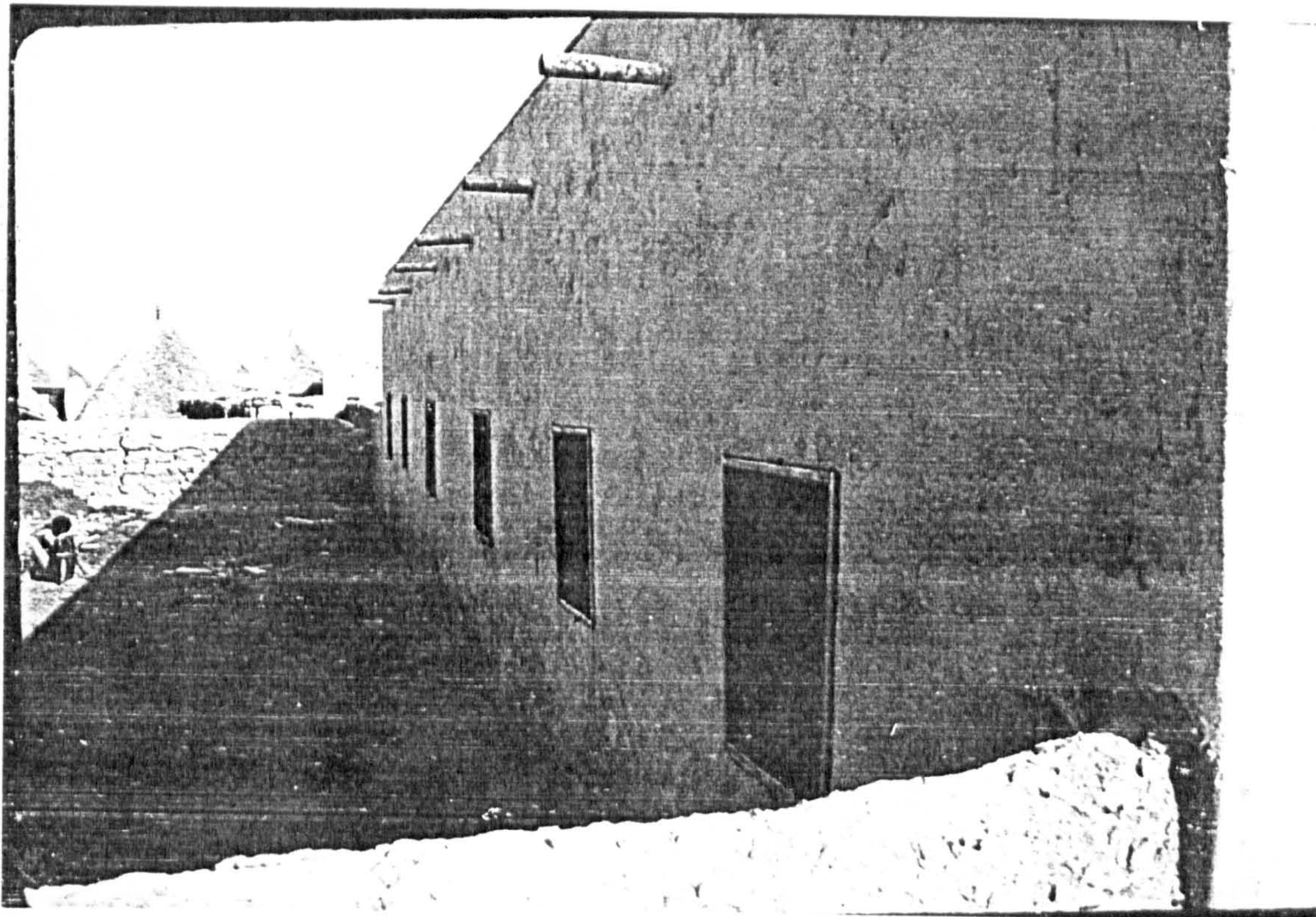


Plate 7.69.

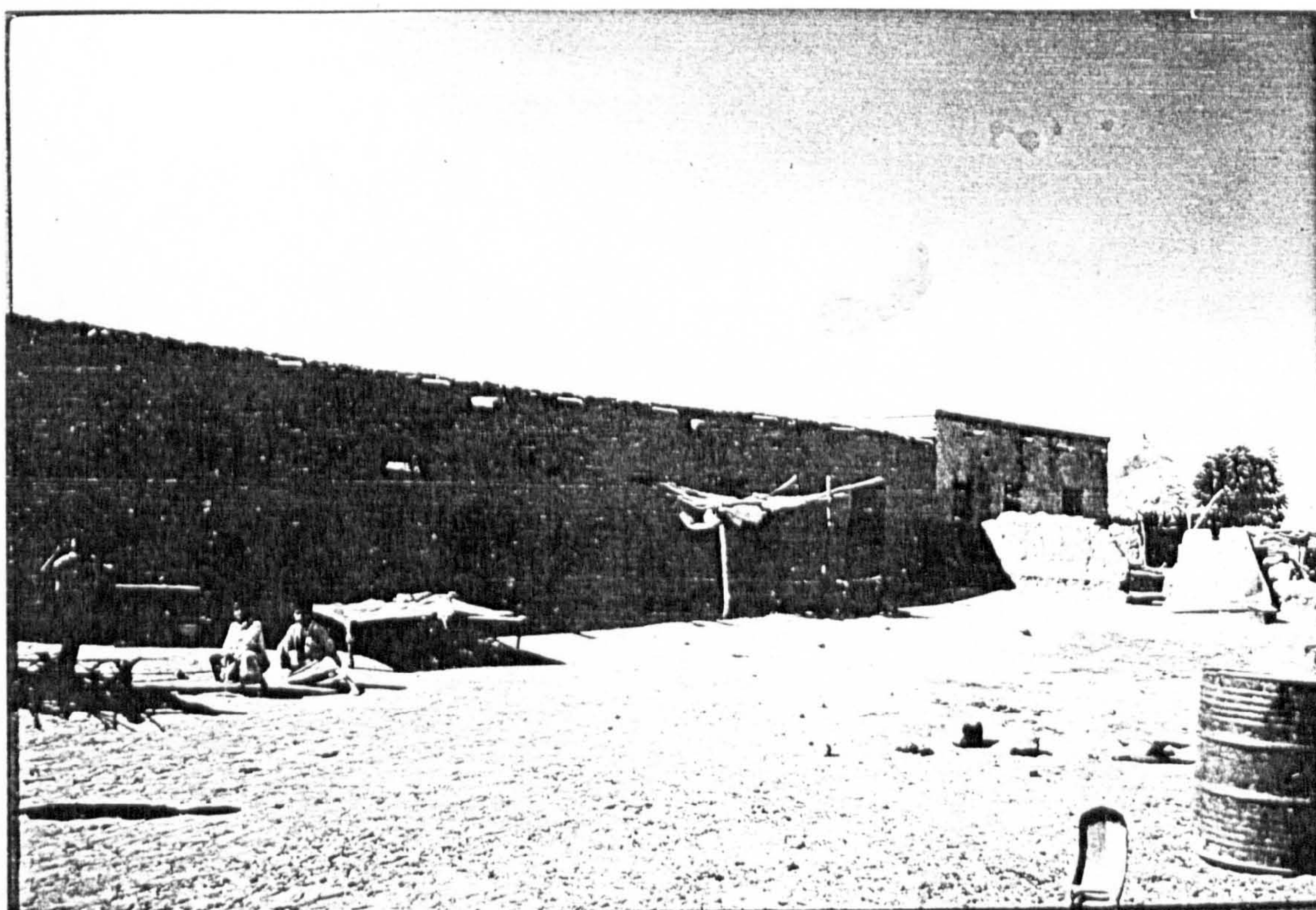


Plate 7.70.

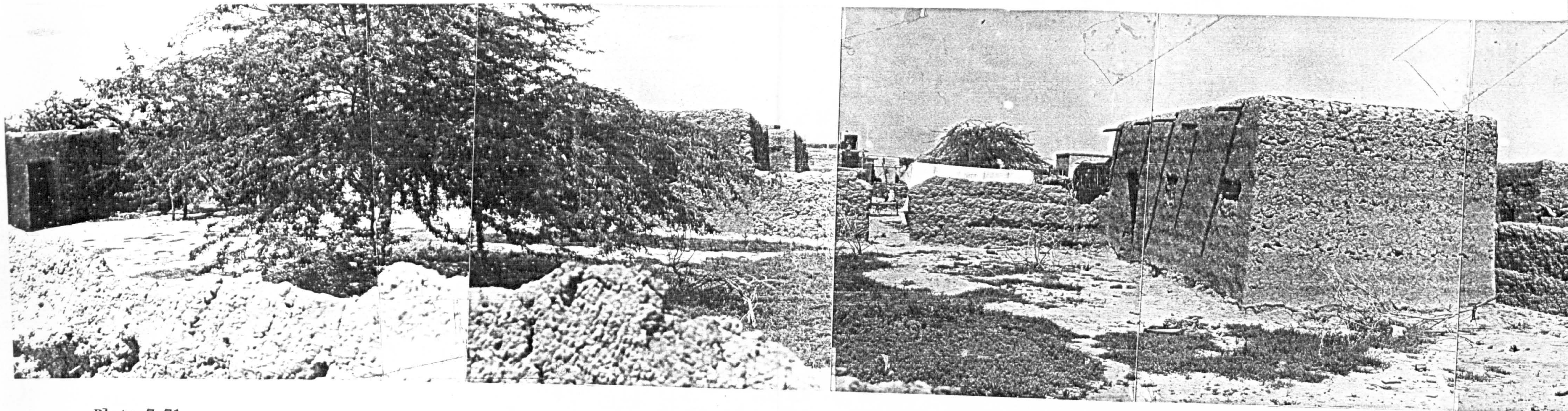


Plate 7.71.

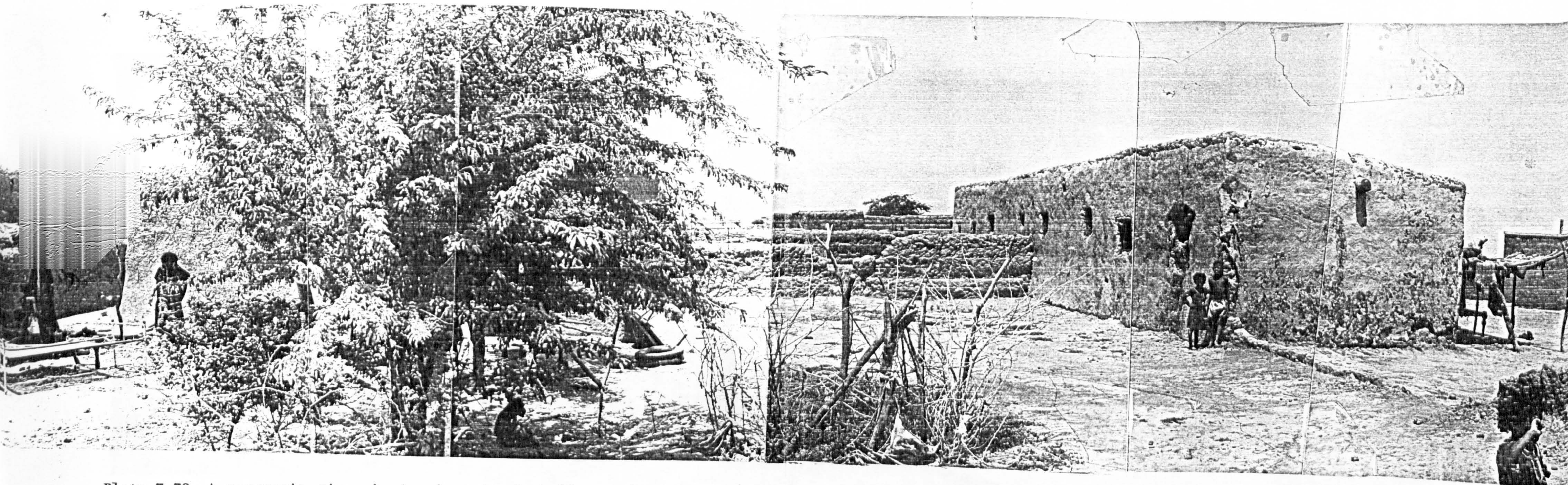


Plate 7.72. A panoramic view showing how the Rashaidaa amalgamate adjacent plots in order to accommodate several elementary families in one house (Fig. 7.11.).

(Source: the author)

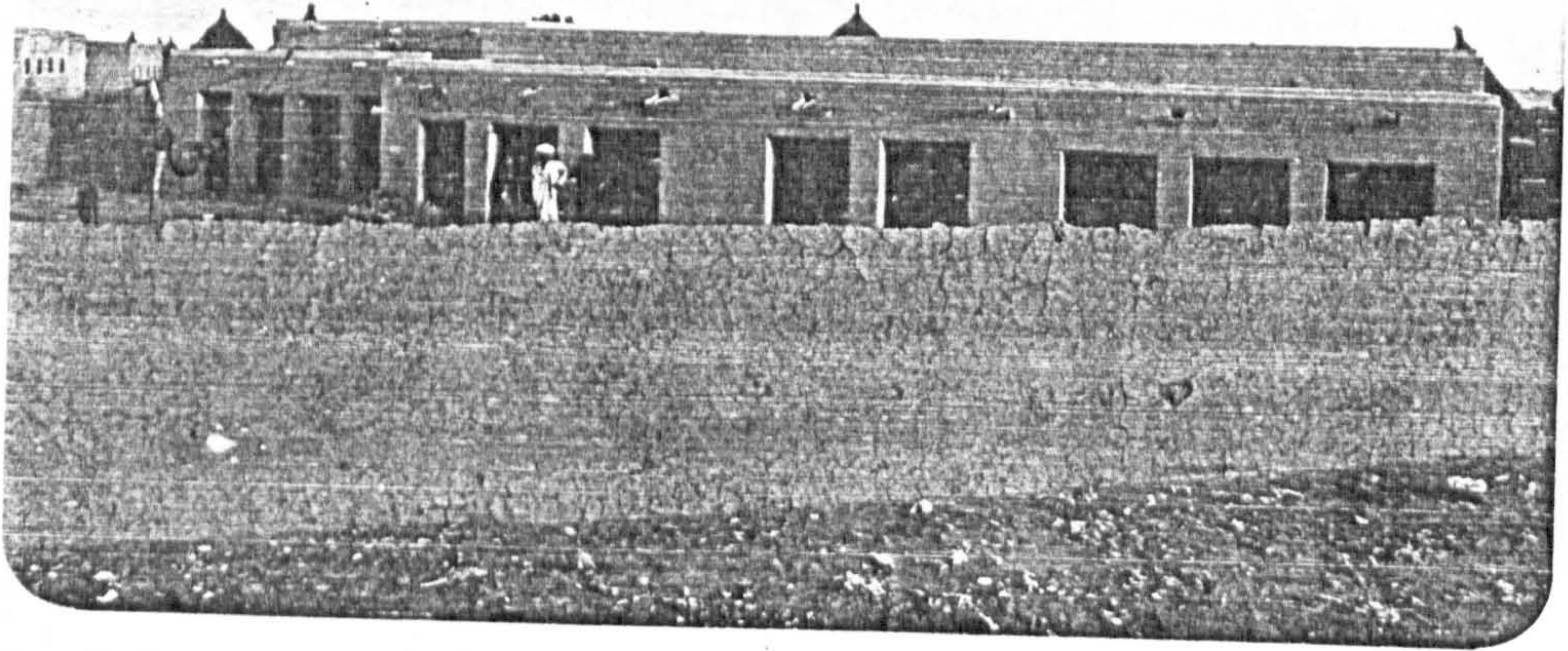


Plate 7.73. A house in Mastura accommodating an extended family is developed along the diagonal of the area of land created by amalgamating the adjacent plots allotted to members of this family (Fig. 7.14.).

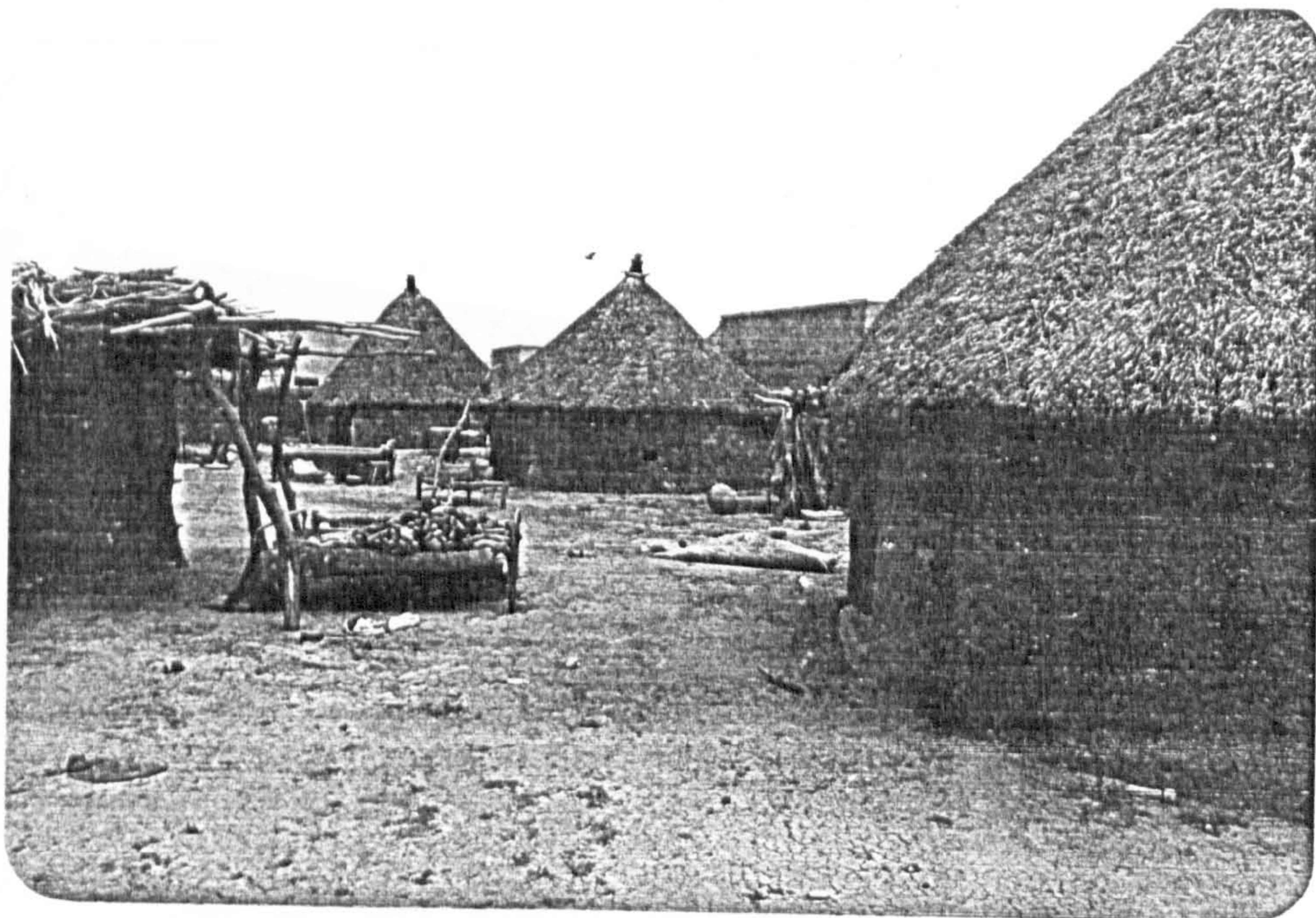
(Source: the author)



Plate 7.74. The co-wives of the Rashaidaa man are accommodated, each one, in the row of rooms which form the house of the such extended family.

(Source: the family)

Plate 7.76.



Plates 7.75. to 7.78. (on this page and the next one) The group of huts or rooms inhabited by members of the Rashaidaa extended family are arranged in such a way that they open onto the central courtyard of the house.

(Source: the author)

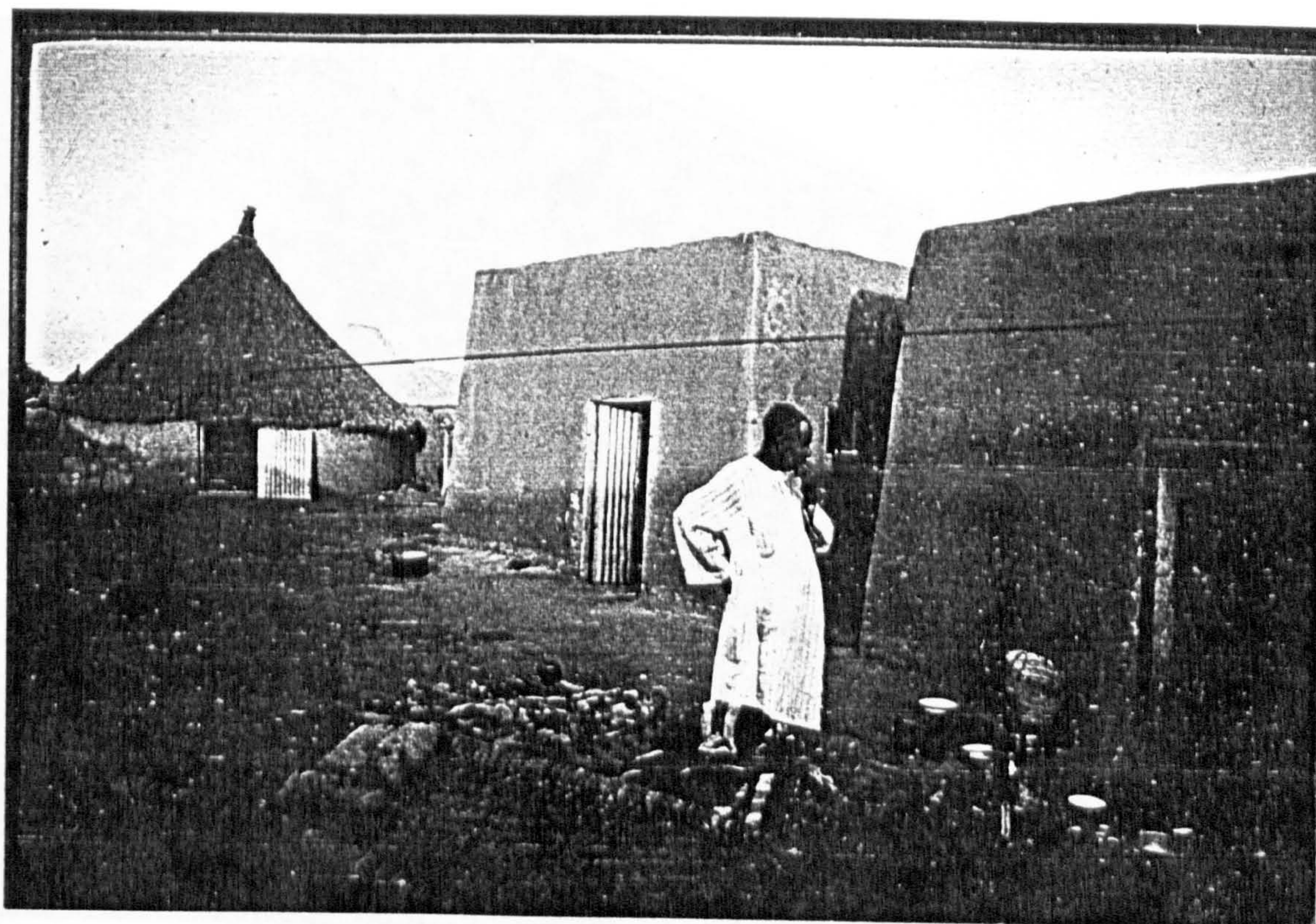


Plate 7.76.

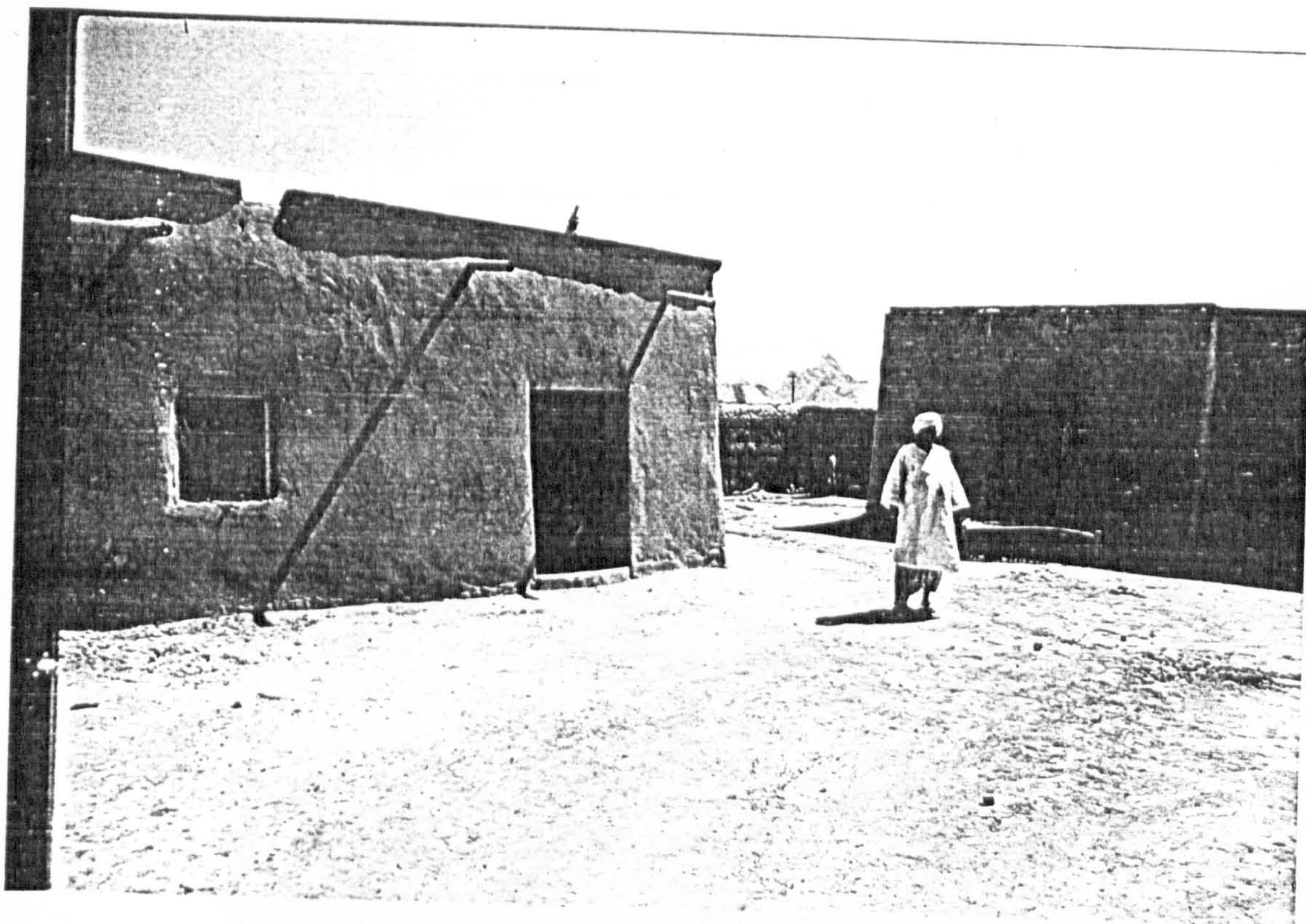


Plate 7.77.

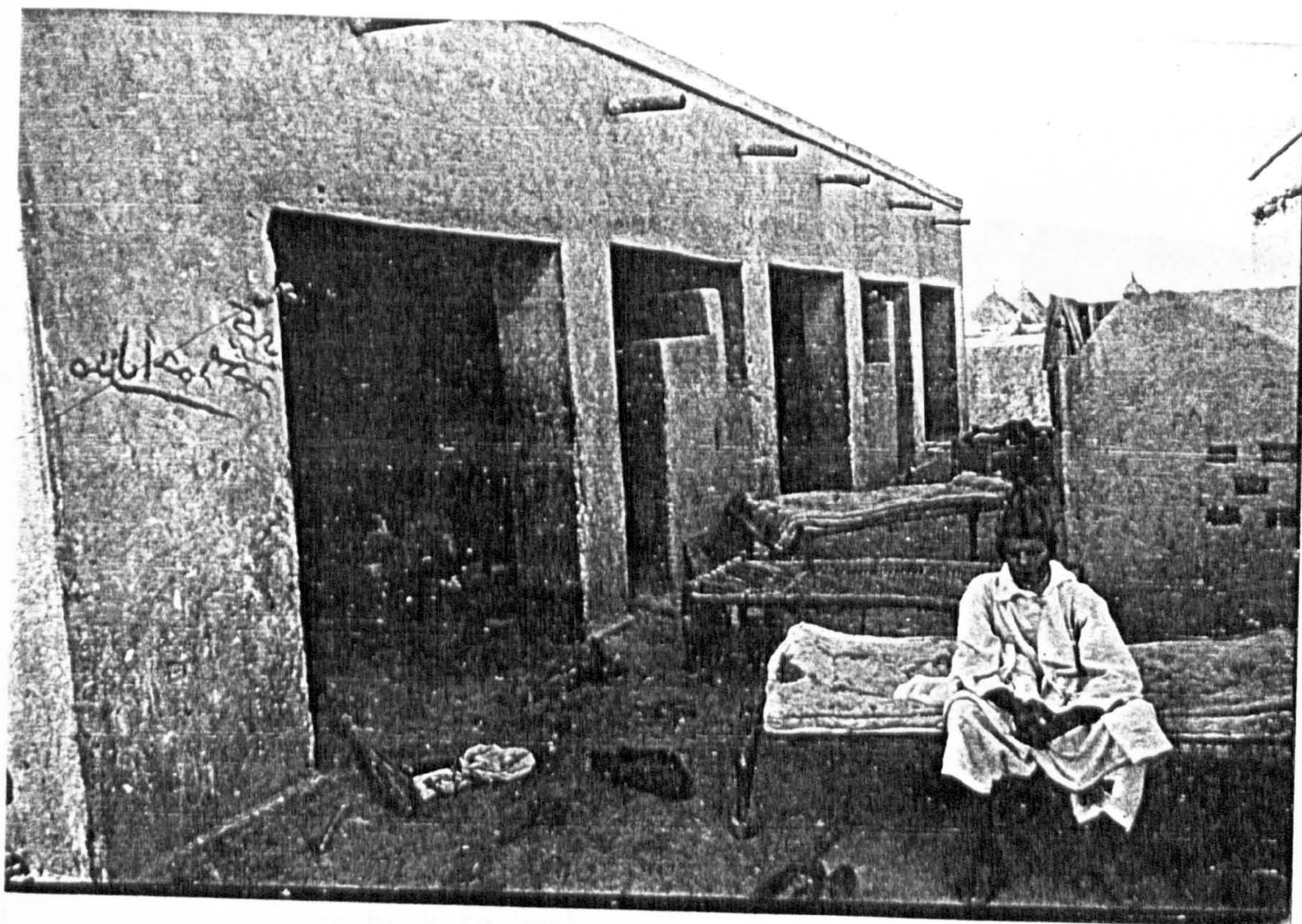
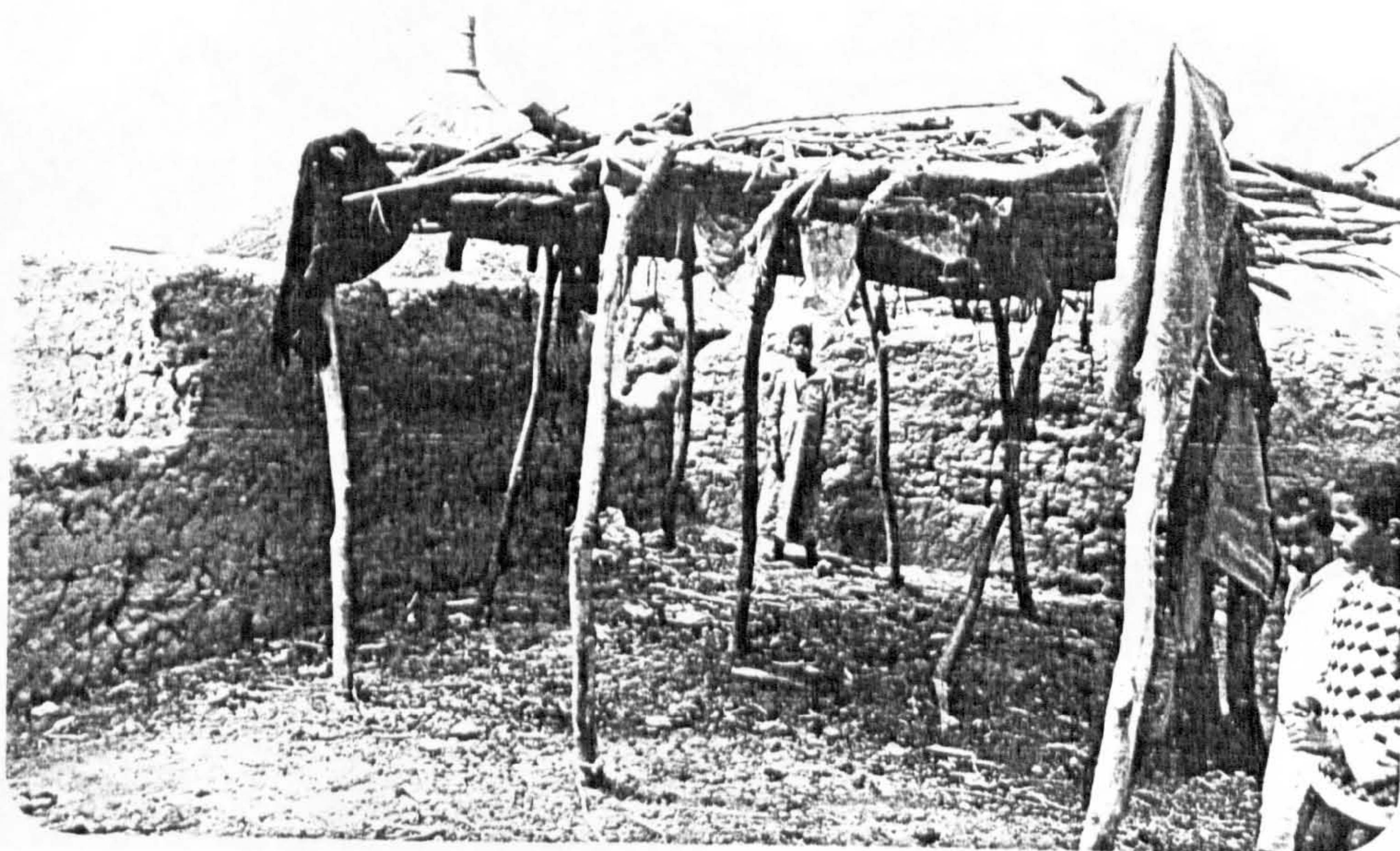
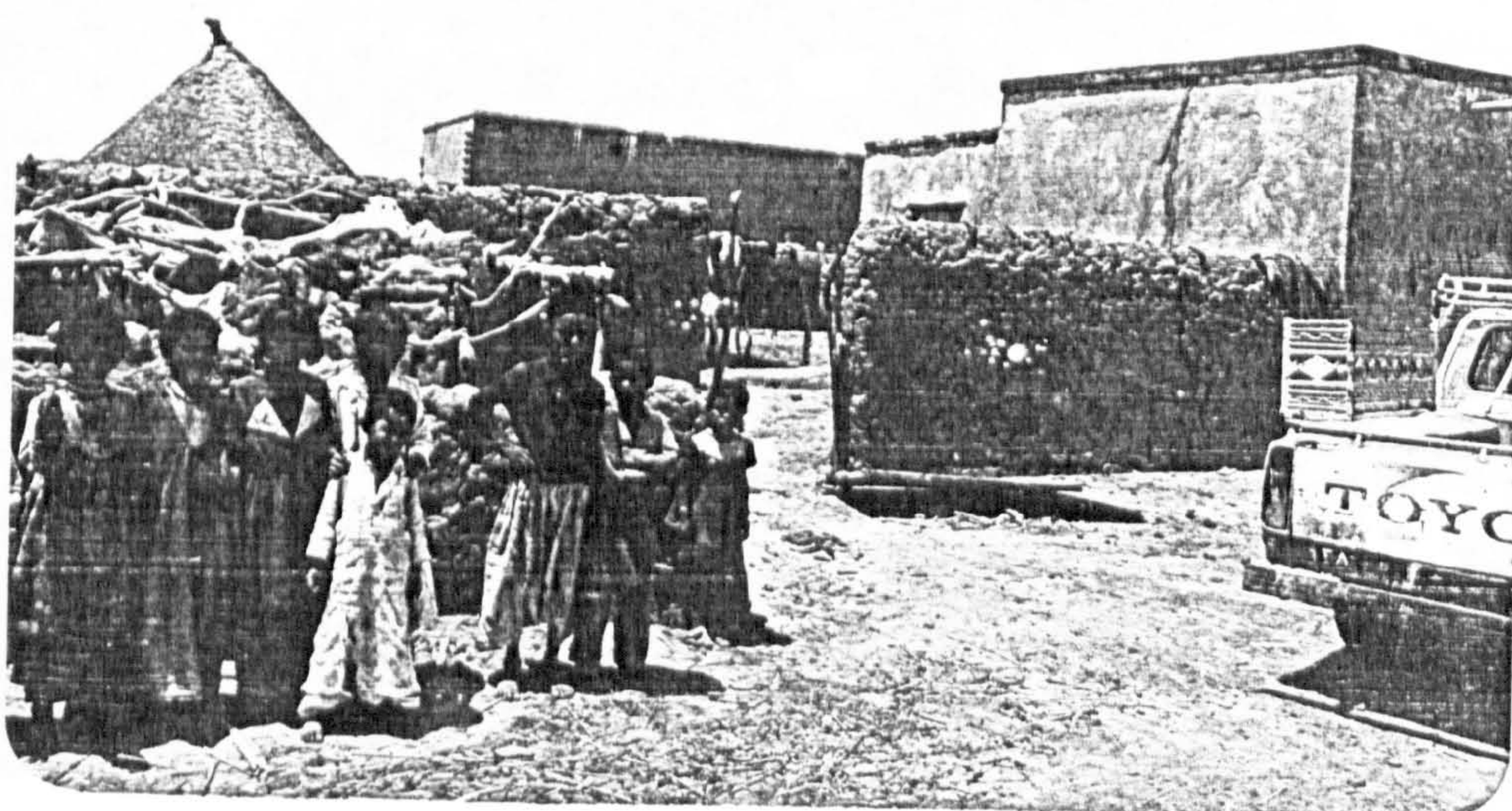


Plate 7.78.



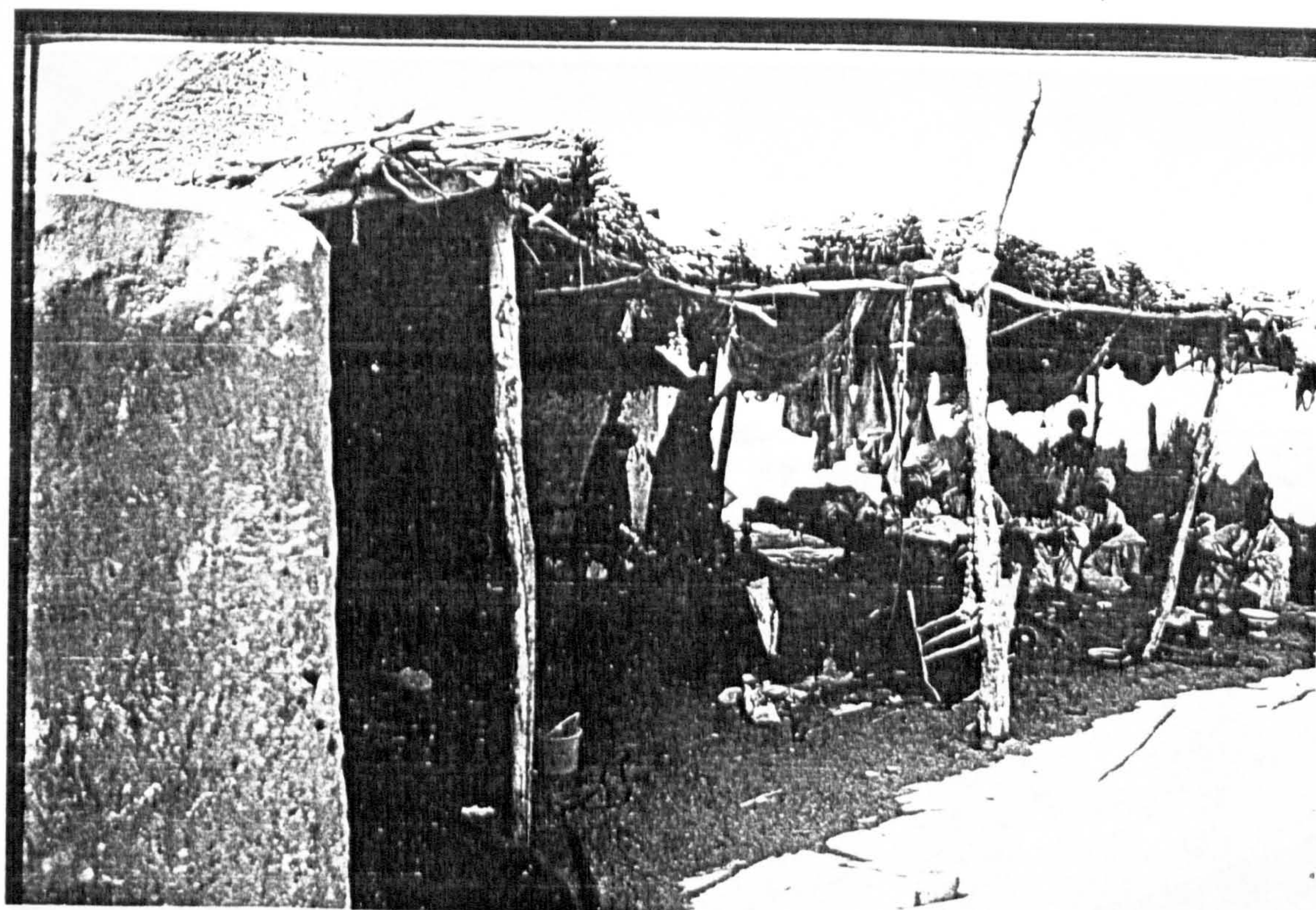
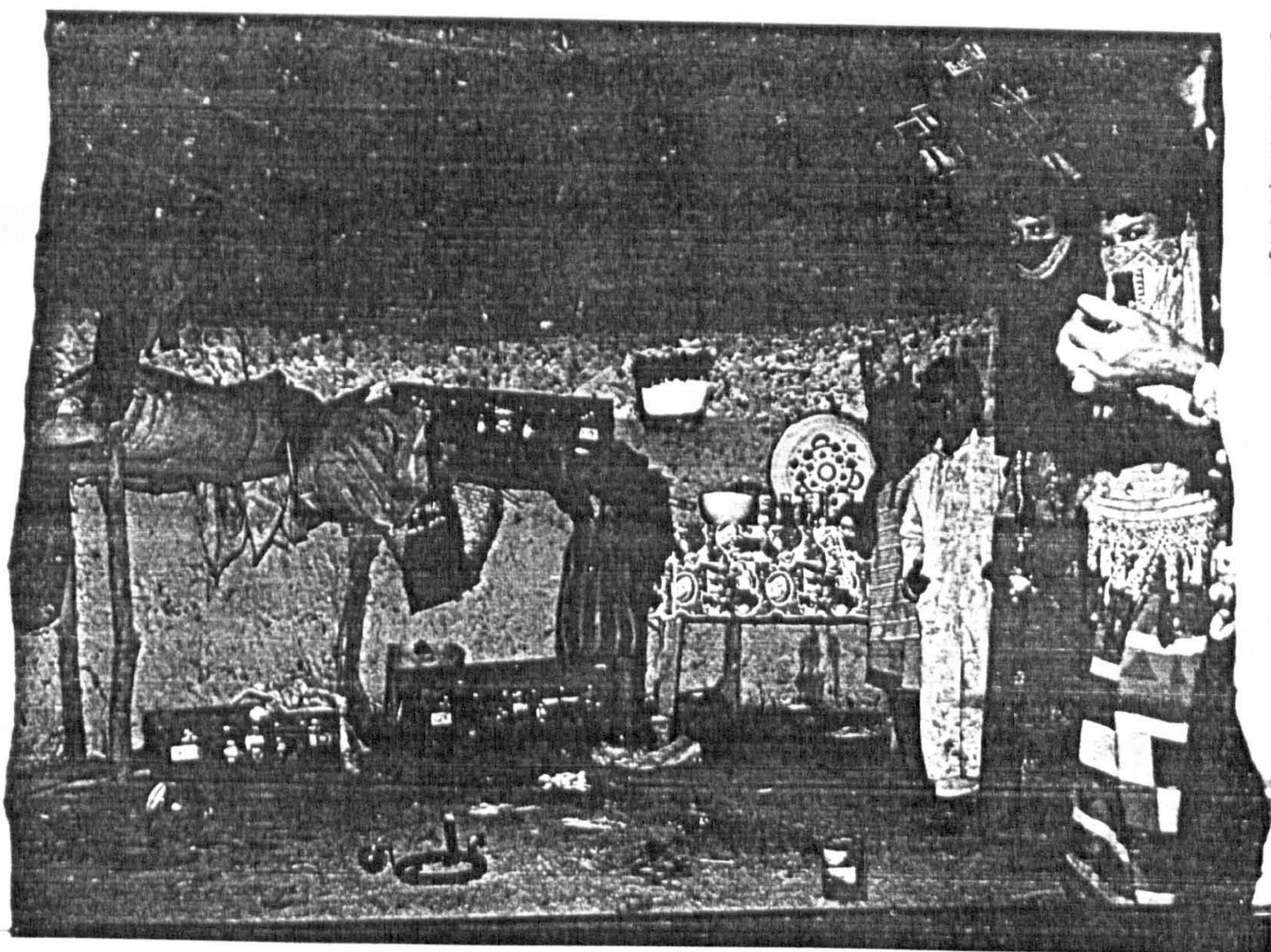
Plates 7.79. and 7.80. (above) The parts of the house inhabited by the two Rashaidaa elementary families living as an extended family may be combined together front to back or back to back.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.81. and 7.82. (above) The children of a Rashaidaa extended family playing in the central courtyard of the house.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.83. and 7.84. (above) The women of a Rashaidaa extended family help each other with their housework.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.85. The older wives of a Rashaidaa man can monitor his younger wives as they receive guests in their quarters during his absence.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.86. The goats of the Rashaidaa extended family are tethered together in the central courtyard of the house.

(Source: the author)

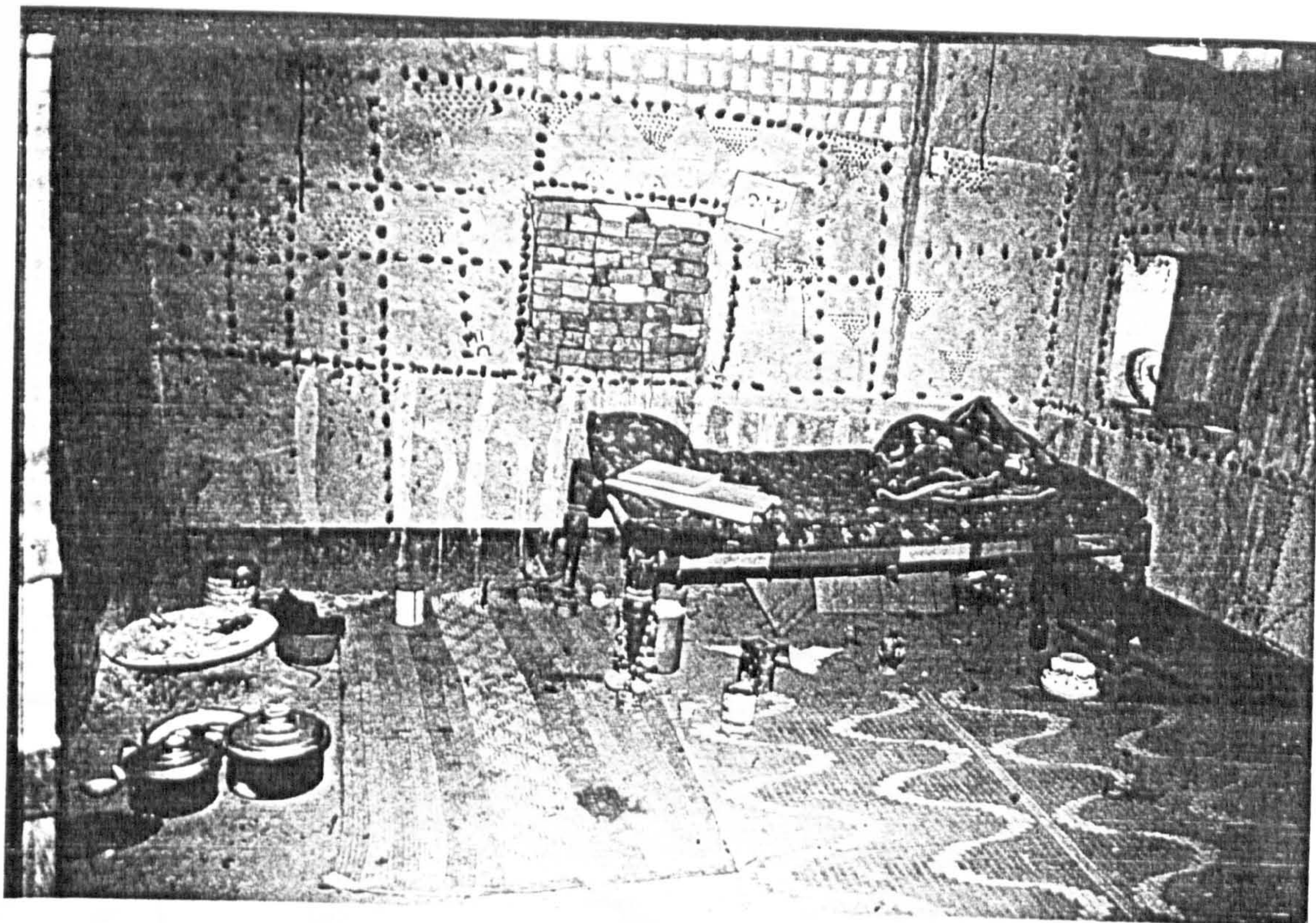
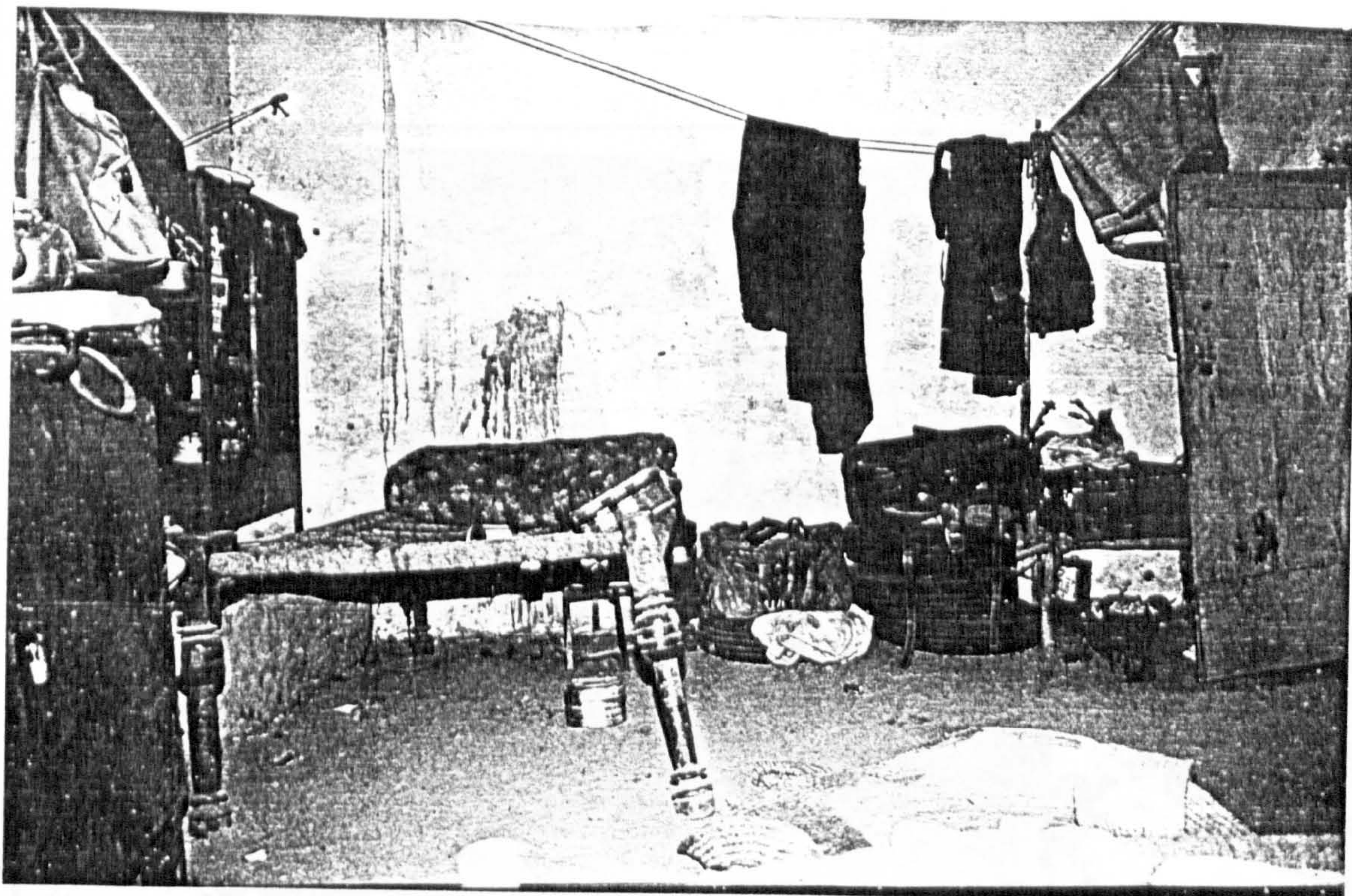


Plate 7.87. The firewood and food rations of the Rashaidaa elementary family are kept in such a way that reflects the degree of independence of this family.

(Source: the author)



Plates 7.88. to 7.90. (above and on the next page) Show the layout of the pieces of furniture and domestic appliances inside the room or hut inhabited by the Rashaidaa elementary family.

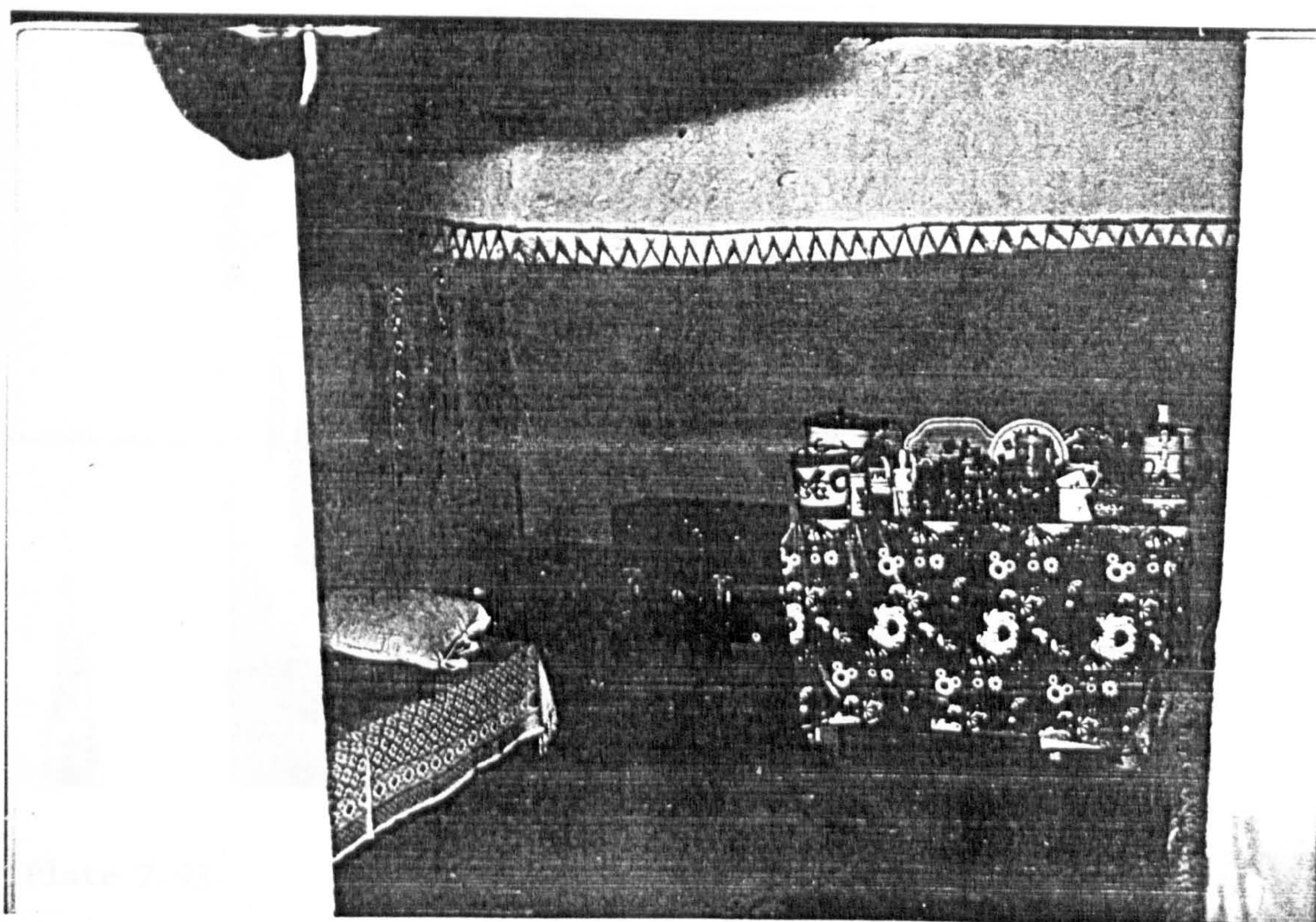
(Source: the author)



Plate 7.89.



Plate 7.90.



Plates 7.91. to 7.95. (on this page and the next two pages) The possessions of the Rashaidaa elementary family are kept and displayed in, above and around a cabinet specially made for this purpose.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.92.

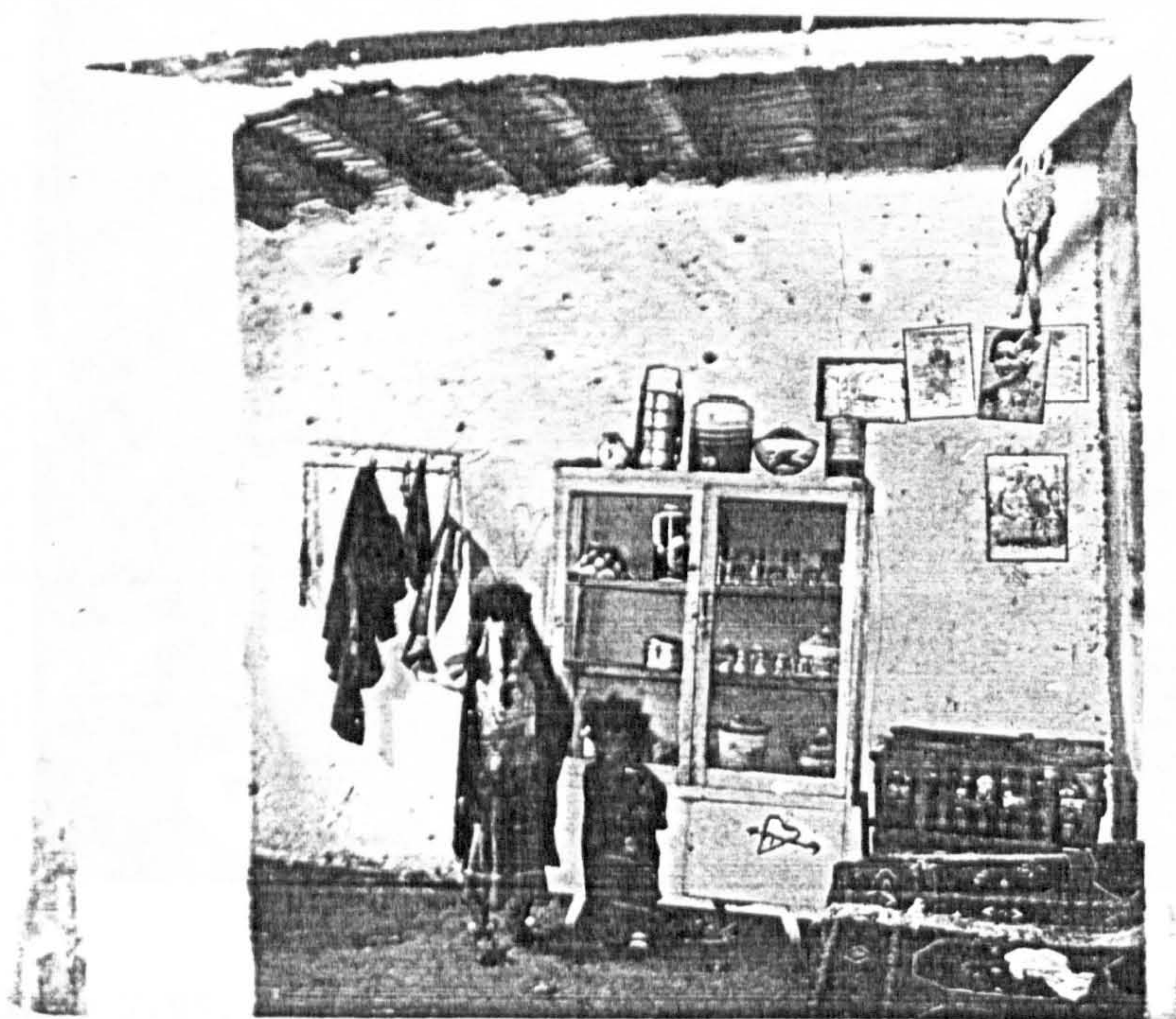


Plate 7.93.

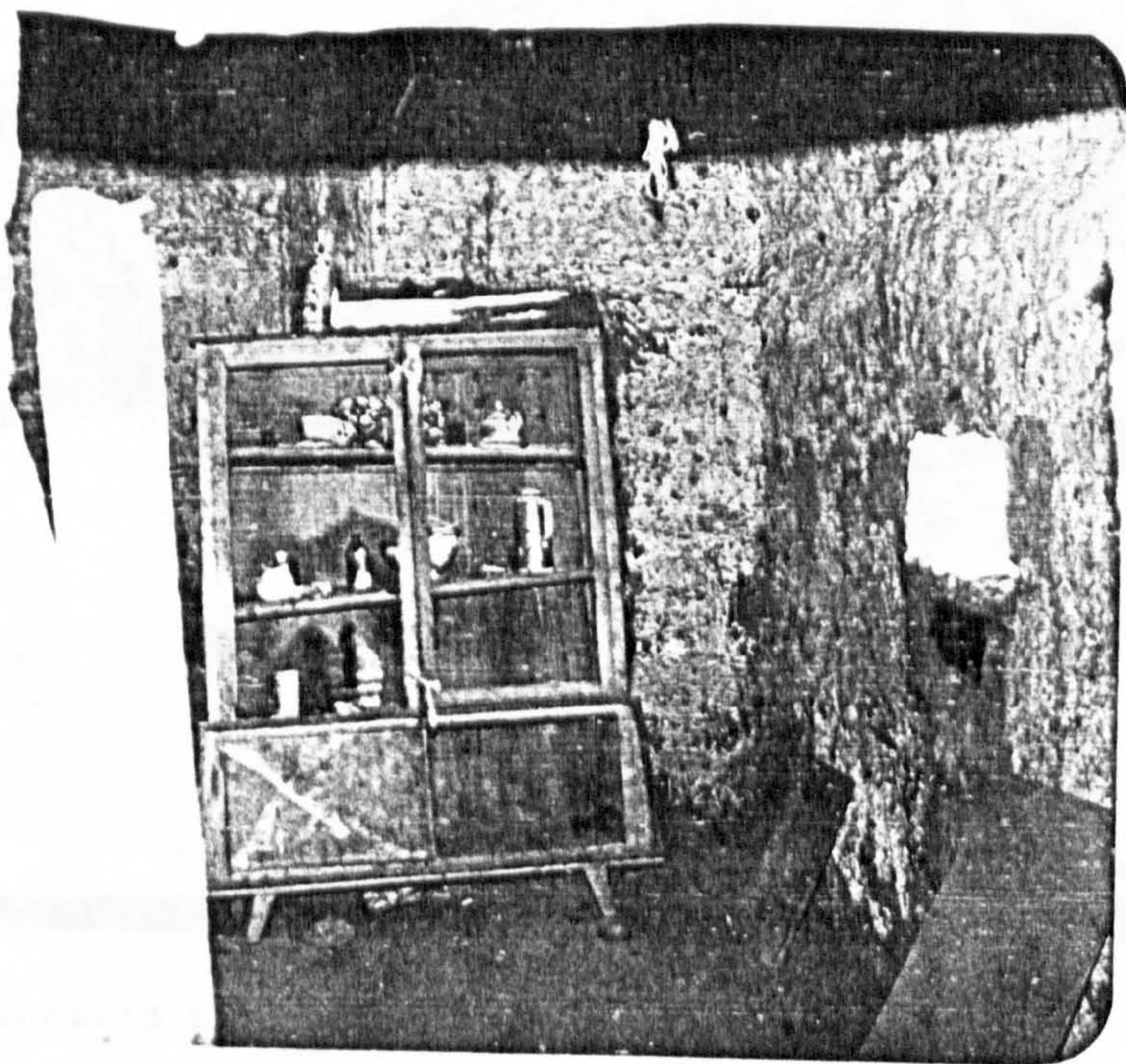


Plate 7.94.

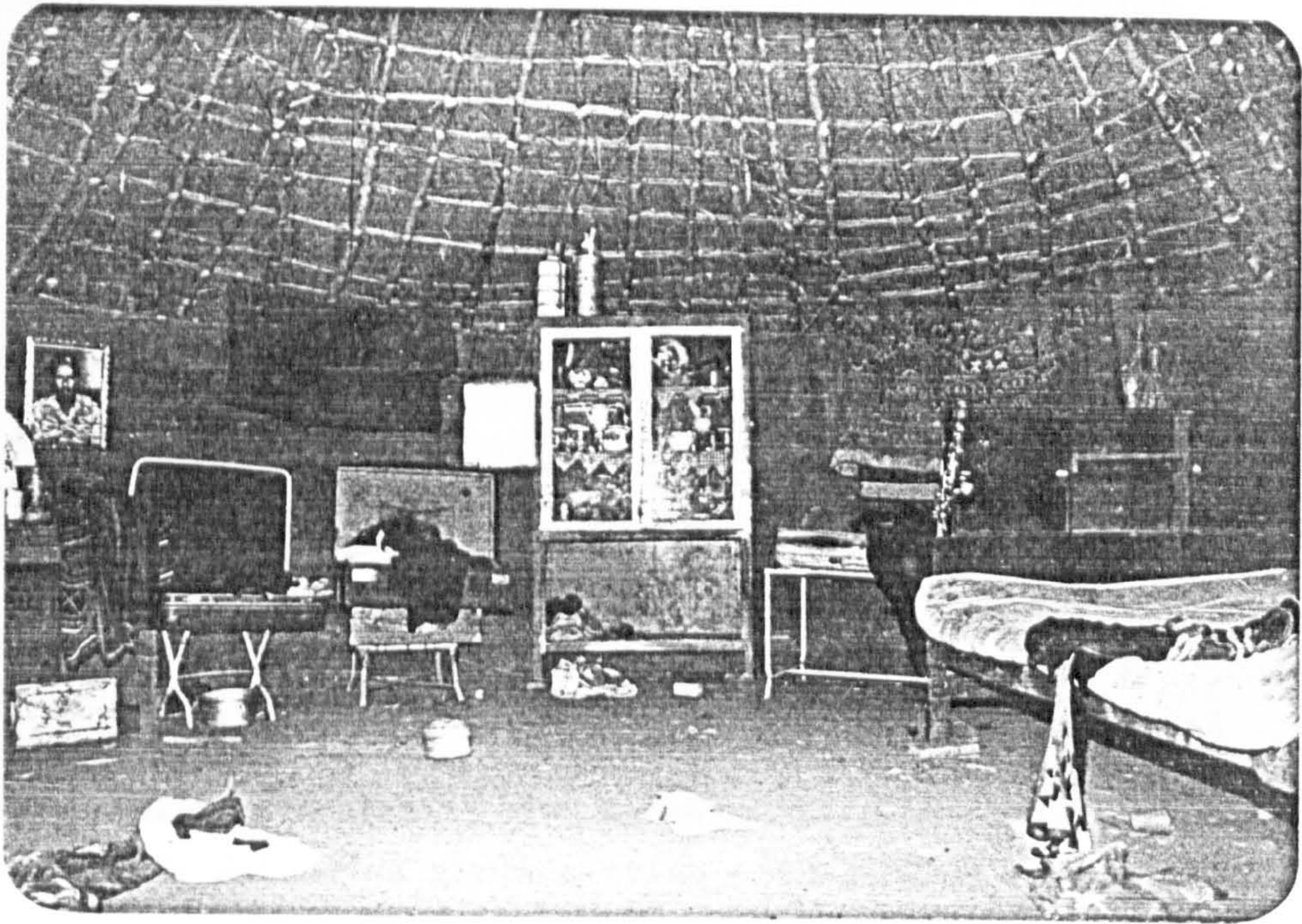


Plate 7.95.



Plate 7.96. Rashaidaa boys gathering around their father.

(Source: the author)

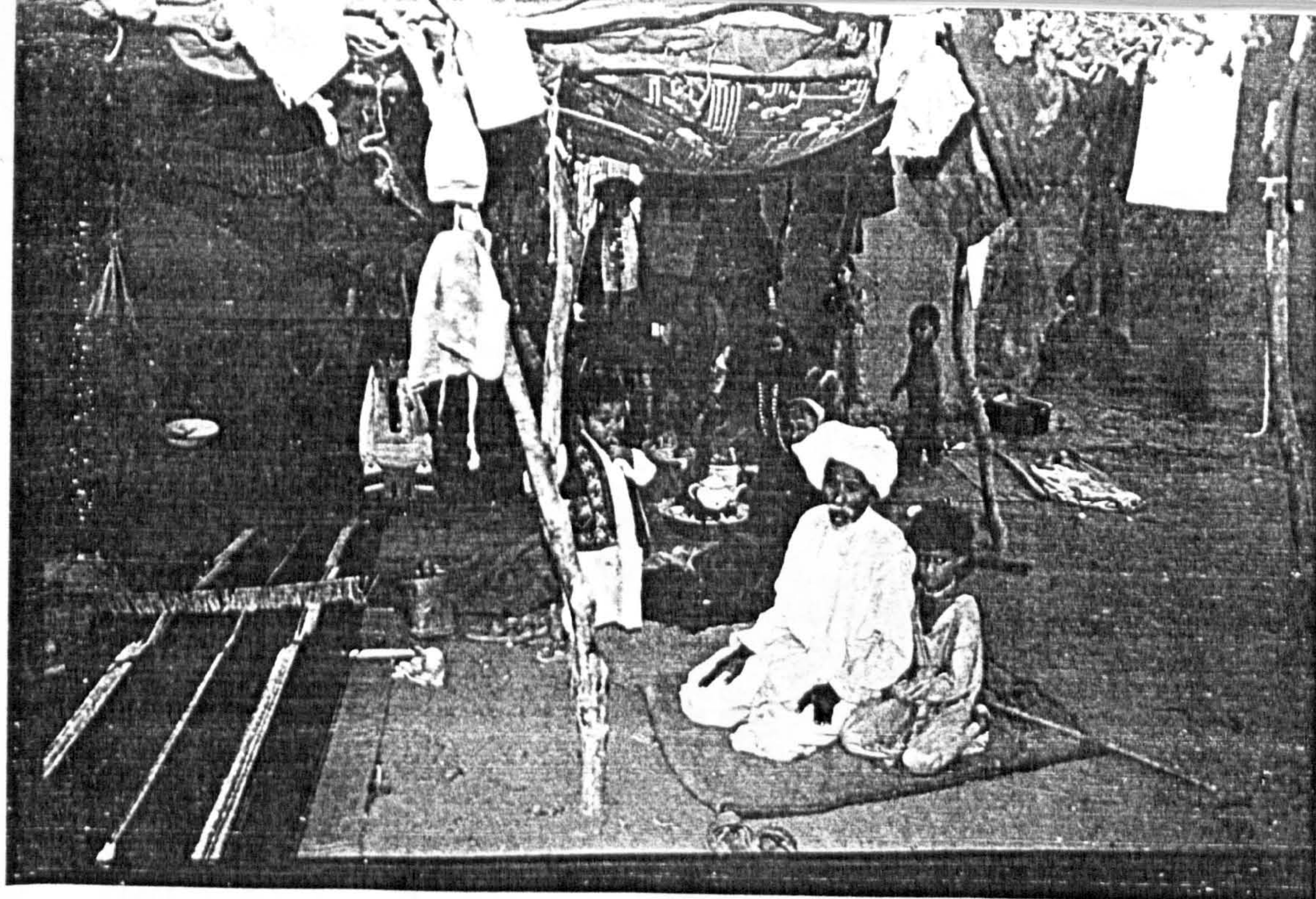


Plate 7.97. Rashaidaa girls sitting around their mother.

(Source: the author)

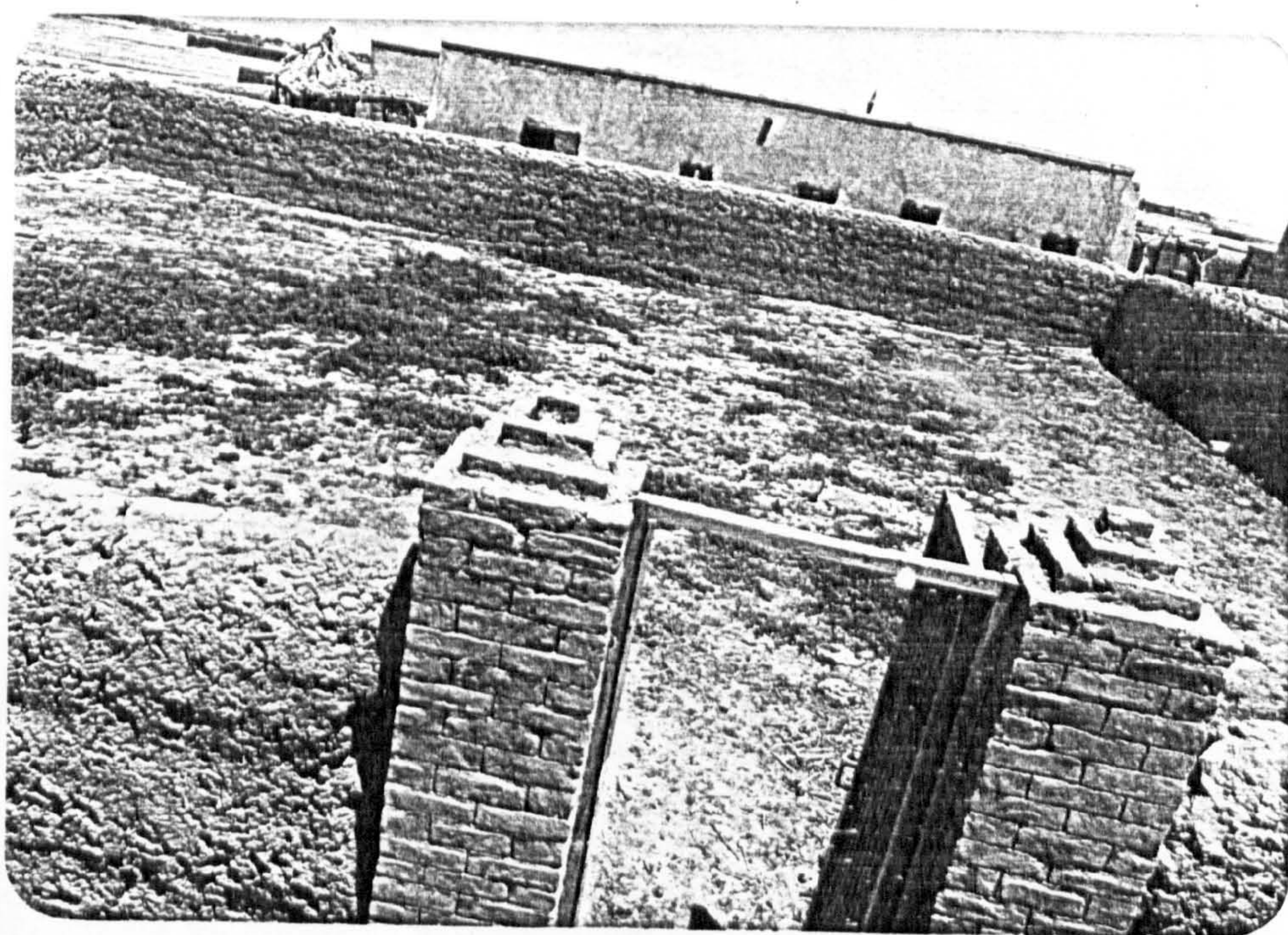


Plates 7.98. and 7.99. (above and on the next page) The Rashaidaa young men and women mix freely and even court as they are closely monitored by their parents.

(Source: the author)



Plate 7.99.



Plates 7.100. to 7.103. (above and on the next two pages) Examples of housing plots in the Beja housing areas showing how the allottees spend most of the funds allocated for building their houses on constructing the boundary walls.

(Source: the author)

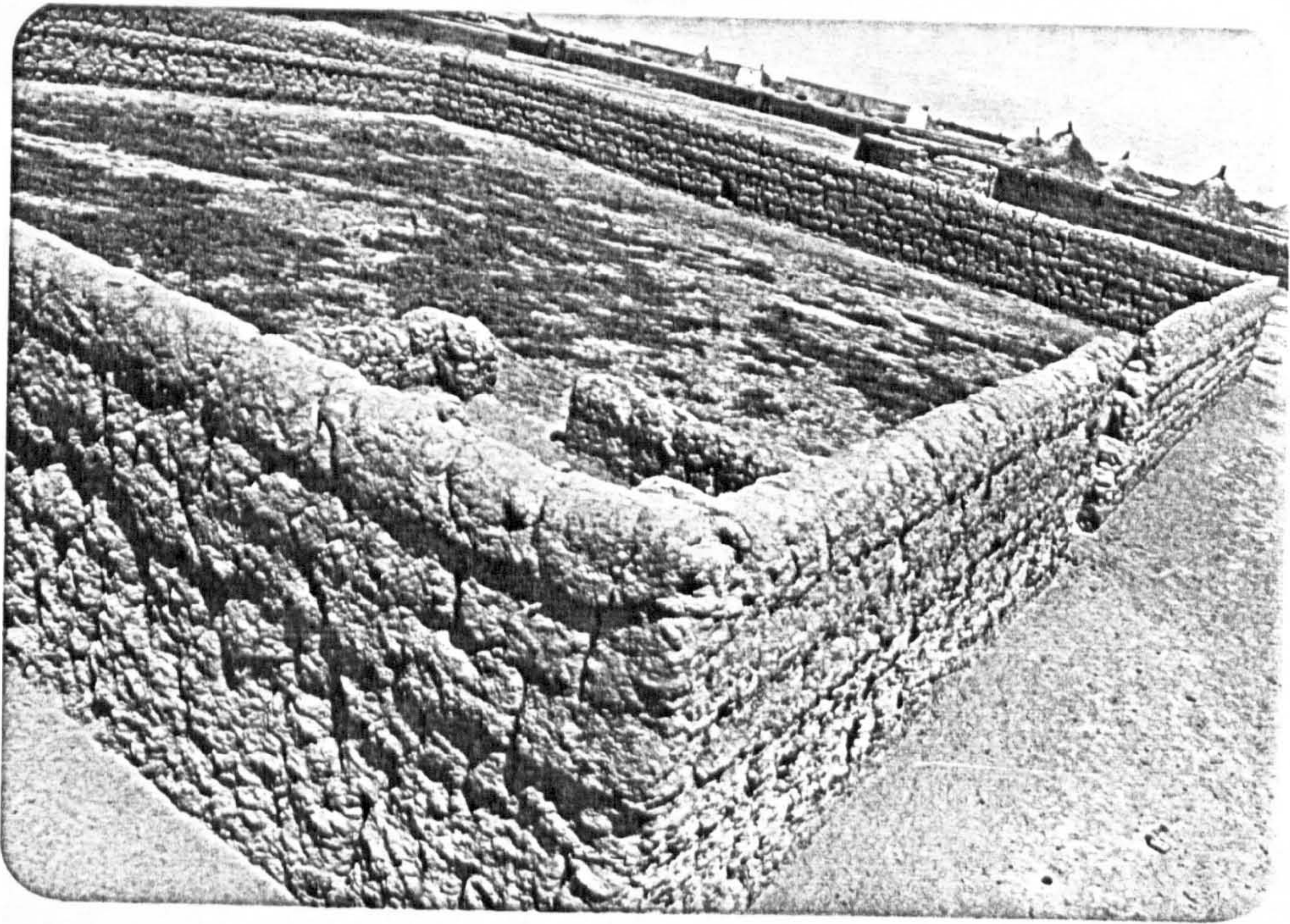


Plate 7.101.

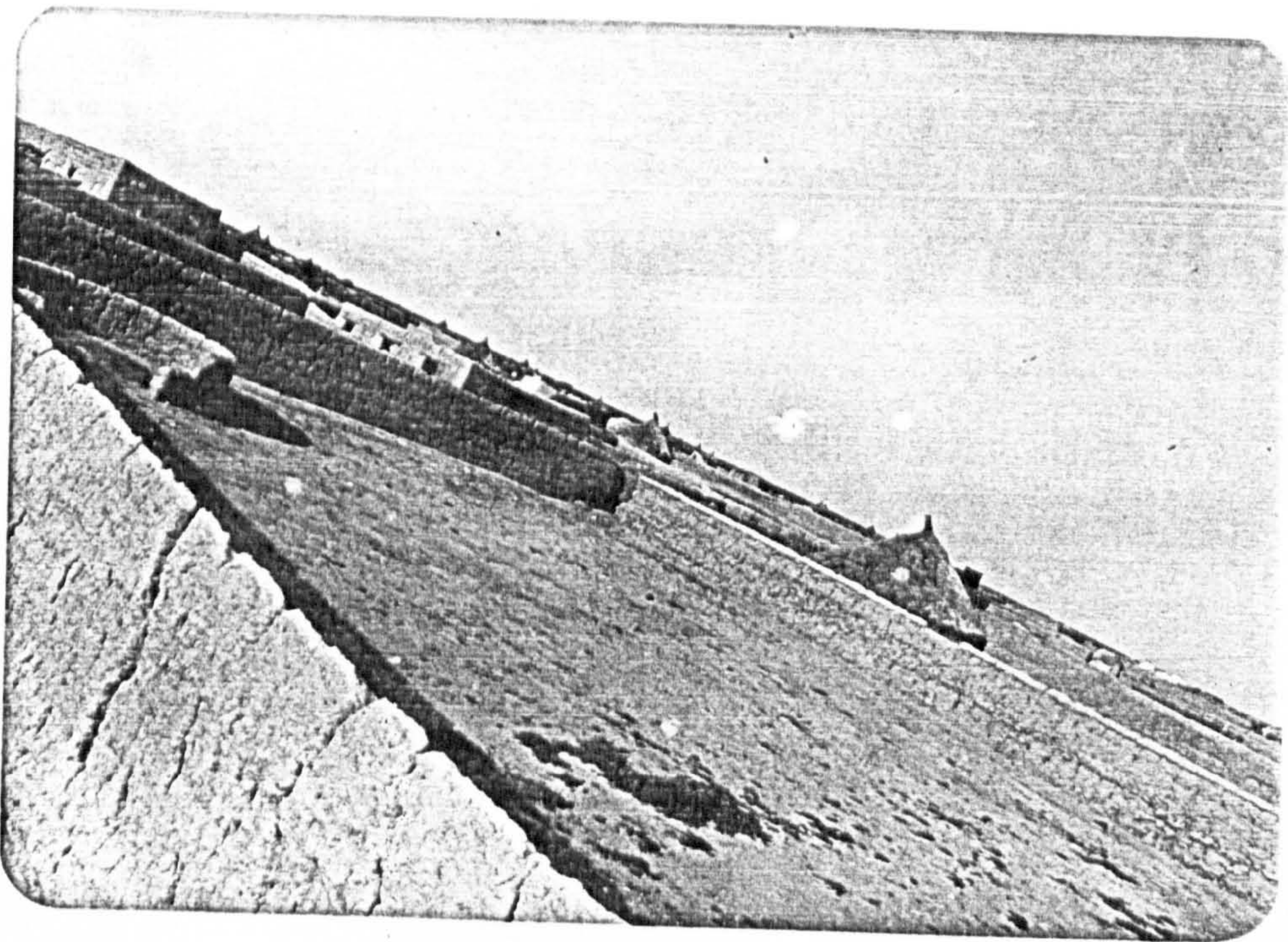


Plate 7.102.

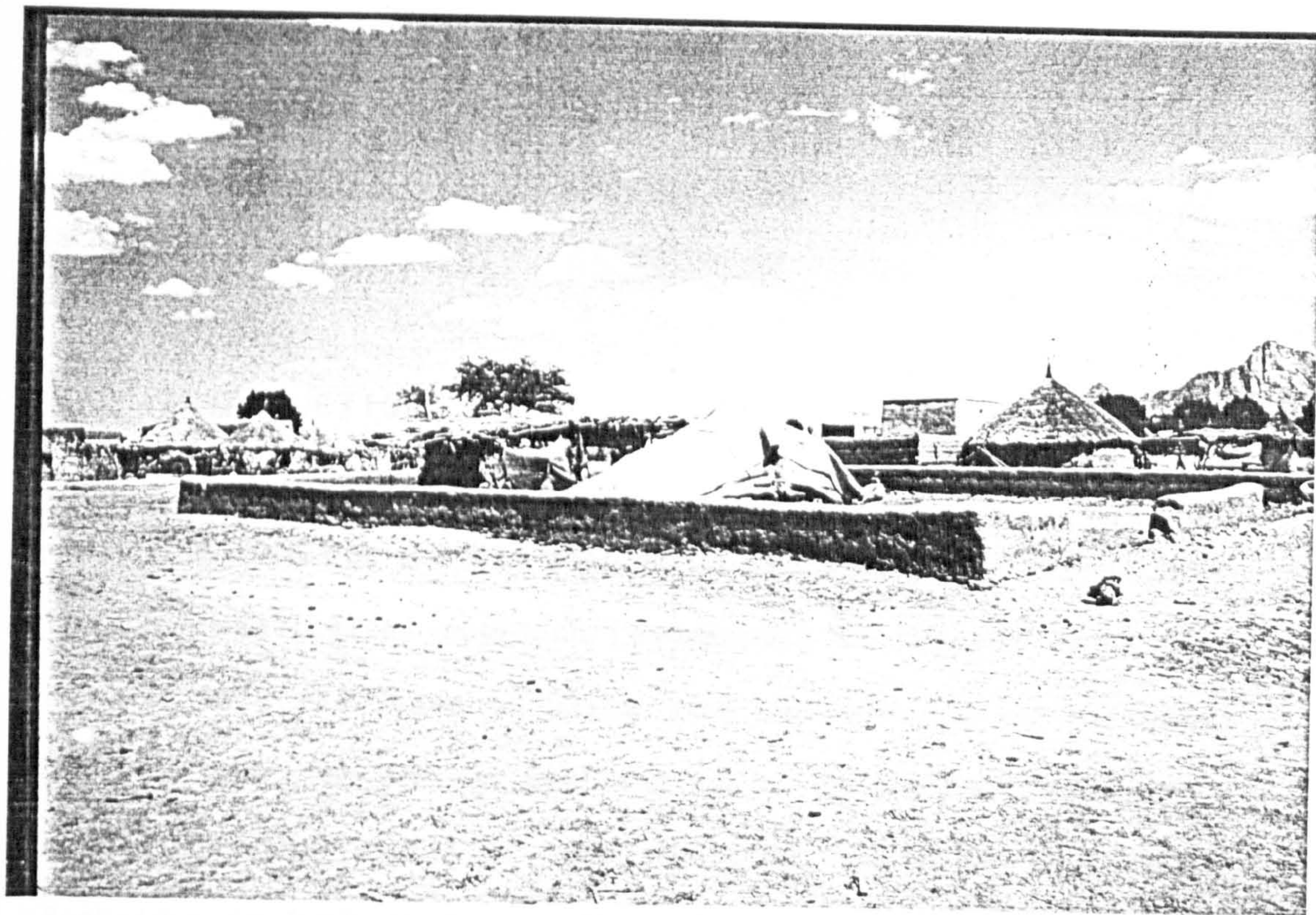


Plate 7.103.

CHAPTER EIGHT

A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH TO DWELLING SPACE: AN ASSESSMENT

8.1 INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this chapter is to demonstrate the validity of the phenomenological approach recommended in Chapter Four. It also aims to show the value of using such an approach as the basis of official policies towards dwelling space. To realise these aims, the basic characteristics of the dwelling space of the Beja and Rashaidaa in both their nomadic and urban life styles are compared and contrasted. The various problems associated with the responses of the two tribes towards official planning and practice are also identified.

The validity of the phenomenological approach is demonstrated through relating basic variations in the dwelling space of the two tribes to major differences in their socio-cultural systems. It is also demonstrated by identifying those spatial characteristics of the dwelling environment of each tribe which remain relatively stable despite the variation in life style. The value of ^{having} linking official policies ^{to} the phenomenological approach is shown through indicating the benefits which could be gained from applying such alternative policies at various levels of the overall dwelling environment.

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The chapter is divided into three main parts. The first part identifies the basic characteristics of dwelling space of the two tribes and links these characteristics to certain aspects of social and cultural life. It also examines the responses of the two tribes towards official policies and practice and identifies some of the problems ensuing from these responses. Based on the data presented in the first part, the second shows the validity of the formulations developed as a part of the recommended phenomenological approach. In a similar way, the third part is based on the data presented in the first, but this time such data are used specially to demonstrate the value of the approach.

8.2 THE BASIC CHARACTERISTICS OF DWELLING SPACE OF THE BEJA AND RASHAIDAA AND THE RESPONSES OF THE TWO TRIBES TOWARDS OFFICIAL POLICIES AND PLANNING.

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The spatial organization of the territories of the Hadendowa Beja clans is an important element in maintaining the socio-political life and security of the tribe. At a lower level of dwelling environment, that of the settlement, spatial relations between various households and communal places which constitute a nomadic camp remain relatively stable during the process of migration. These general characteristics of dwelling space show the strong relationship between social and physical space.

The movement and settlement of the various lineages and branches of the Rashaidda as part of their nomadic life style are neither based on social criteria nor are they indicators of co-

operation within the tribe. In the urban life style, attempts aimed at accommodating the different branches of the tribe (the Baraasaa and Barateikh) in the same housing scheme in Kassala (Mastura) had failed because these branches could not tolerate living side by side.

With regard to the socio-physical space of the Rashaidaa, in general terms, social nearness does not necessarily mean, or lead to, physical proximity. In the nomadic life style, closely related and adjacent households who disagree are obliged to separate, and one of them to join another camp. This is apparent in the changing membership of the dry season camps from one year to another. On the other hand, in the urban life style, social links between distantly related households accommodated in the same housing area have not developed substantially and this is evident from their insignificant communal life.

These responses of the Rashaidaa indicate that the branches and lineages of the tribe are not linked by strong social ties. This is evident from their social life within the whole country of the tribe, as well as in their individual settlements.

In both their nomadic and urban life styles, the Beja settle in remote sites which are camouflaged, or made inhospitable, by the nature of the landscape. The choice of such sites is linked to the aloofness of the tribespeople and their deep concern for the protection of their women.

Unlike the Beja, the Rashaidaa, in both their nomadic and urban life style, have always settled in central and open locations. This strategy is considered compatible with the traits of the tribespeople as they are very gregarious. Such locations, therefore, enable them to interact with as many people as possible. This strategy also shows the prominent place and important role assumed by the women in the society, because the setting of settlements in such locations entails the interaction of these women with strangers during the absence of the migrating men of the settlement.

The strong links between the psychological and social demands of these two tribes and the nature of the location of their settlements is indicated by their responses to official planning which does not respect such demands. This is exemplified by the case of the Beja group (referred to in 7.1) who could not tolerate being surrounded by housing areas inhabited by culturally dissimilar tribes. They, therefore, had to be relocated in other areas situated at the edge of the town. This has disrupted the life of this group, as well as the development plans intended for the town in which they live.

The response of the Gazaiza branch of the Rashaidaa who live in Kassala towards official policies shows that the tribespeople prefer to live in central locations. By insisting on settling illegally in such a location near the railway station, they missed the chance of being accommodated in the newly planned extensions situated at the edge of the town. Such illegal settlement, which occupies a public open space, causes environmental problems. It also

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leads to public health problems which are difficult to contain in central areas.

In both the nomadic and urban life style the Beja receive and accommodate distantly related male guests under special shady trees and shelters located in the forefront of their community areas. Closely related guests are also entertained and accommodated in public places - such as Khalwas, special shelters and areas around corner shops - located at the edges of the community area, or in public space but which is ^{as} far away as possible ^{from} the houses. The special arrangements adopted by the tribe for receiving guests is a reflection of their deep concern about meeting the demands of hospitality but, nevertheless, without diminishing the privacy of their women. The above arrangements show also the high level of co-operation present in a communal way by which social commitments towards guests are met.

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Besides the reception and accommodation of guests, the public places, referred to above, are used also as informal schools for children and also as communal residences for young and unmarried men. The use of these places for such purposes indicates the concern of the Beja about the initiation of boys into manhood, and further to introduce them at an early age to the people and culture of the tribe. It indicates also a keen desire to ensure the protection of their women, whose social life is mostly centred inside the houses.

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Despite the high levels of co-operation within the Beja community, closely related households living side by side, are

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separated by physical distance and barriers. In the nomadic life this is achieved through the wide dispersal and careful screening of the tents. In the urban life it is accomplished through the erection of boundary walls and screening of windows. Although the expense of erecting these walls could amount to a sizeable proportion of the overall cost of the house, they are still considered of top priority, to the extent that they may consume the limited resources allocated for the building of the house.

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The wide physical distance between the extended family households living together in the Rashaidaa nomadic camps reflects the social distance which separates these social units. In urban life, where the tribespeople live together in officially planned housing areas, they are still separated by wide social distances. This is partly indicated by the social insignificance of communal and public places - such as public open spaces, coffee houses and mosques.

In the nomadic life of the Rashaidaa, the tents of the extended family are set ^Wvery close to each other. This proximity, considered together with the openness of the tents, permits direct access and visual contact between members of the family who live as one large household. Such spatial relations are crucial, as they facilitate high levels of co-operation especially with regard to child rearing and the protection of women during the absence of the migrating fathers and husbands.

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Various measures are taken by the Rashaidaa in their urban

life in order to recreate the same spatial relations which characterize the household of the extended family in their nomadic camps. Adjacent housing plots are partially or fully amalgamated through the removal of the boundary walls, or building ones which do not exceed 120cm in height. This is also achieved by building the house (with its normal level windows) on the boundary line between adjacent plots. Permitting direct access and visual contact between adjacent plots has such great importance, that, in order to achieve this the people are determined to deviate from approved designs and to violate the Building Regulations.

The basic objects and pieces of furniture used inside the Beja tents in their nomadic life, are similar to those used for the same purposes in the rooms built in urban areas. This is because the use of these rooms and tents is governed by the same cultural norms which do not allow the accommodation of young men or entertaining guests in such private places. Because of this, and as a result of the rigid sizes of the rooms designed and constructed for the Beja in officially planned housing areas, the tribespeople waste their limited funds unjustifiably in the spacious rooms and huts built for them and which exceed their actual needs.

Inside both the nomadic tents and the rooms built in urban areas the Beja usually arrange the basic objects and pieces of furniture one behind the other, with the bed located furthest from the entrance. The adherence to this layout follows from the deep concern for the protection of the privacy of the couple living there. However, as the tribespeople exercise little control over the

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design and building of the rooms (in urban areas) in which they live, they have to take measures in order to ensure the desirable levels of privacy. To achieve this they surround these rooms with boundary walls and screen their normal level windows with blankets. Whilst the former measure is considered costly the latter makes the rooms uncomfortably hot as it lowers the levels of ventilation.

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Whether it be inside the oblong tent of the nomadic life style, the circular hut/ built by traditional builders from other tribes in the settled life style, or in the rectangular room designed by architects in officially planned housing areas, the Rashaidaa arrange the beds, floor mat, stove and cabinet and containers used for storing food rations in a basically similar order. This is aimed at enabling the housewife to do the housework, look after her family, and at the same time entertain the guests of the household. However, due to the high incidence of migration among men, the housewife needs the help and protection of closely related households living nearby in order to assume these responsibilities and social commitments. In order to achieve this, the Rashaidaa open up, and lay out, adjacent households in the specific manner described above. The relationship between the arrangement of the domestic items and furniture, and the layout of the adjacent households which enclose them, is a clear proof of the interconnection between various levels and objects constituting housing environment.

8.3 THE PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH ADOPTED TOWARDS THE PROBLEM OF DWELLING SPACE: A REVIEW AND ASSESSMENT.

Our investigation into the basic characteristics of the dwelling space in both the traditional and urban life styles of the Beja and Rashaidaa, shows remarkable variations between the two tribes despite the fact that they are both exposed to the same climatic conditions, and pursue similar economic activities in their nomadic life style, and that they are both Moslem tribes, and that they are accommodated in identical ^{urban} housing environments (in their urban life styles.) This variation demonstrates that the traditional practices of these tribes towards dwelling space, unlike official policies, are not based primarily on limited environmental, public health and economic criteria.

Our investigation into the dwelling space of the Beja and Rashaidaa shows that the strategies which they adopt to achieve environmental and economic objectives are organically connected with those strategies that are aimed to satisfy the basic requirements of social and cultural life. For example, the opening up or screening off of any individual space, to enhance or limit ventilation, is done in a way which also ensures protection of women, rearing of children and offering of hospitality to guests. In a similar way, the organization of space to accommodate various age, sex and kin groups so as to serve economic purposes also takes into consideration cultural demands and social obligations.

Judging by the findings of this investigation we may conclude

that traditional societies develop and use dwelling space according to certain cultural rules and not just as a response to limited environmental and economic needs. We can also conclude that the development of space in this manner is essential for ensuring the social and psychological well-being of these societies, as well as preserving their cultural integrity and dignity.

The findings of our investigation which are cited above support the use of a phenomenological approach based upon the writings of Martin Heidegger which has been adopted in this thesis - as reviewed in Chapter Four (4.1). Heidegger sees the development of space through the process of building as a means of enabling the human being to dwell on earth and exist in his fullest sense, i.e. with all his social relations and cultural dimensions. But, according to this approach, space can be related to human existence in this manner only if it manages to assemble the foursome - the sky, earth, gods and men - in a single fold, i.e. if it is organized to allow satisfaction of the environmental, economic, social and spiritual needs of this being in a unified way.

The validity of this approach and its usefulness for addressing the problem of dwelling space can be tested through the basic concept of the 'worlds' which is developed as part of this approach. According to Heidegger, when space is organized in terms of anything - the dwelling environment in our case - in such a way that this assembles the foursome in a single fold, the basic characteristics of the socio-cultural world of the people, making and using this thing, become manifest⁽¹⁾.

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It is difficult and impractical to test the validity of the approach of Heidegger by directly applying his philosophy to the dwelling space of the two tribes because he does not express his formulation in a specific and detailed manner. But, in line with our discussions in Chapter Four, we can use the model of existential space developed by Christian Norberg-Schulz in order to bridge the gap between philosophy and abstract concepts, and the concrete dwelling environment.

Throughout the analysis and interpretation undertaken in this chapter and the two preceding it, the model of Norberg-Schulz has been a very valuable tool. It has allowed us to link the basic characteristics of this space with the major dimensions of social and cultural life. The fact that the process of analysis covers various levels and elements of the environment, and considers the two tribes each in two different life styles, enables us to have a good insight into the links between spatial and socio-cultural characteristics. The findings gathered about any level or element of the environment or at certain life style are tested against those inferred from other elements, levels or life styles.

Referring back to the Heideggerian view of the nature of the 'world' of a society, and regarding the relationship between social characteristics and organization of space, the size, location and general layout of the beds and floor mats used inside the houses of each of the two tribes is a clear indicator of the social roles *also*

shown by the development and use of public space. Important information about the social ties between closely related adjacent households can be inferred from the spatial relations connecting such households. At the level of the overall housing area, the development and maintainance of communal places reflects the social life and shows the nature of ties which connects various lineages and clans of the tribes who live there.

Concerning the relationship between cultural characteristics and organization of space, the layout of the basic things and furniture inside the houses of each of the two tribes reveals the high regard for values associated with such aspects like initiation of boys into manhood and protection of girls. This is also demonstrated through organization of space at other levels of the environment. It is manifested in the form, orientation and degree of openness of the type of tent used by each tribe, as well as the spatial relations connecting adjacent tents. In the urban life style, this is expressed in terms of the boundaries erected by the tribespeople around housing plots. In both the nomadic and urban life styles, it is indicated by the high significance or insignificance of communal places and public space. In general terms, this is evident from the nature of the locations chosen by each tribe for settlement.

The findings of our investigation about dwelling space of the two tribes do not cast light only on their social and cultural characteristics, but more importantly reveal also the specific spatial strategies associated with these characteristics. We have shown that despite the agreement of the two tribes about basic

objectives of social and cultural life - such as those referred to above - they organize space in a remarkably different manner. From this we can conclude that spatial organization is an important manifestation of the concrete existence of the social human being in his life on earth.

Referring back to the approach of Norberg-Schulz towards dwelling space, the findings of our investigation lend some support to, and cast light on, the concept of environmental image (reviewed in Chapter Four) which he uses to explain the relationship between the relatively stable socio-cultural characteristics and the more variable environmental patterns and forms which they generate. The fact that organization of space by these tribes in the nomadic life style, and their responses towards official planning in urban areas, are not guided by any prepared drawings or written instructions, we can assume that these actions are based on mental constructs, ² Because the actions taken by the people of each tribe in each life style are, to a great extent, ² consistent, we can assume that organization and responses towards space are motivated by a common mental construct shared by members of each tribe.

The circular mud and thatch huts which are built inside the house courtyard of the Rashaidaa are arranged in a different manner from the rectangular brick and concrete rooms. While the huts are constructed around a central courtyard, the rooms are built one beside the other forming a row over looking the main courtyard of the house. The huts and rooms in which the Beja live in urban areas are not widely separated like the tents of the nomadic camps, but in

the urban lifestyle the separation is accomplished through boundary walls and fences. Despite the variations cited above, and if we consider the cases of each of the two tribes, space is organized in all situations in order to maintain the levels of interactions between private and public space which are part of each tribe's social and cultural norms. Accordingly, we can conclude that the mental constructs referred to above are not constructed in terms of rigid environmental patterns or forms, but rather through more flexible spatial frameworks each of which permits certain required levels of interaction.

By considering the nature of the environmental image in this way we can then use the theory of existential space developed by Norberg-Schulz in order to examine the interaction of traditional societies with the environment and through this identify the spatial frameworks which are employed to satisfy the basic requirements of social and cultural life. This can prove useful even if these societies are examined in their urban life style, or when they live in officially planned housing areas, as demonstrated by the interpretation undertaken in Chapter Seven.

It is important to emphasize that this process of examination is not aimed only at the organization of space, but more importantly at the social and cultural characteristics which set the standards and regulations for this organization. It is mainly aimed to identify the measures which allow space to assemble the foursome in a single fold in a way appropriate to a particular society, and thus enable the human being to exist on earth within an established set

of social relations and cultural dimensions.

By adopting a phenomenological approach we can guarantee that inquiry into dwelling space will be aimed to identify the spatial frameworks which support socio-cultural life. This will consequently help in generating appropriate housing policies, building regulations and space standards which suit different traditional peoples. Through this, official practice can contribute substantially towards maintaining the social and psychological well-being of these people. It can also help to overcome the various economic, environmental and public health problems ensuing from conflicts produced by the current policies. In order to show the value of our phenomenological approach we examine in the following part of this chapter the actual problems which could have been overcome, and those that may be avoided, had the policies been based on such an approach.

8.4 THE VALUE OF ADOPTING A PHENOMOLOGICAL APPROACH TOWARDS OFFICIAL SETTLEMENT AND HOUSING POLICIES

Neither of the two tribes examined here have been exposed to a large scale re-settlement process involving the whole of the tribe or even large sections of it. Judging by other re-settlement experiences such as that which involved the Nubians (reviewed in Chapter Two), the choice of the locations intended for re-settlement purposes is usually based on economic, environmental and public health criteria and without much consideration for the social characteristics of the people re-settled.

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If the re-settlement of a tribe like the Hadendowa is based on these criteria alone, this will ^{may} dislocate its clans, and disrupt its socio-physical space at the level of the whole country or territory of the tribe. This will undoubtedly affect the social life of this tribe in a negative way. For example, the re-settlement of the Wailaliab clan - which is entrusted with the traditional political leadership and administration of the whole tribe⁽²⁾ - in areas located at the edge of the country of the tribe may substantially ^{diminish} curtail this process of administration, especially if we consider the wide dispersal of the Hadendowa clans and the inefficiency of transportation in their country. On the other hand, re-locating war-like clans accommodated at the edges of the country of the tribe, in more central areas, may diminish the military capabilities of the tribe which depend substantially on these clans⁽³⁾.

These negative effects should not be underestimated. The traditional administration of the Hadendowa still plays a significant role in managing the whole tribe, and this is indicated by the recognition granted to this administration by all the governments and regimes - socialist as well as capitalist, and military as well as democratic - which have governed the Sudan since its Independence. Moreover, the Hadendowa and the other tribes who live with them in the region still regard tribal military potential as an important deterrent and source of security, especially when the ineffectiveness of official efforts aimed to maintain order in this vast region, is also considered.

The general attitudes and responses of the official policy

makers and practitioners towards landscape have remained consistent at all levels of the environment: they usually prefer flat areas which are cleared of landscape elements such as trees, hills, and water surfaces. This was demonstrated by the choice of the area selected for re-settling the Nubians (as described in Chapter Two); it is also demonstrated by the common practice of levelling and clearing any sites intended for building purposes.

Our investigation into the dwelling space of traditional societies like the Beja and Rashaidaa, shows that the element of landscape forms an integral part of this space, and that it contributes substantially towards the psychological well-being of the inhabitants through creating a setting compatible with their traditional perceptions. It also shows that some elements of landscape contribute towards the social well-being of the inhabitants by allowing the creation of certain communal places such as the guest trees. Thus by being made sensitive towards incorporating appropriate elements of landscape, official planning could enhance rather than impoverish the social and psychological environments in the settlements of these tribes.

The lack of sensitivity of the official policy makers to the various attitudes of traditional societies towards settlement in general terms, and the quality of environment which they require for this purpose, causes several kinds of problems. For example, the reluctance of the Hadendowa to settle with their families and practice cultivation in the Gash Delta project, which was mainly planned for them, is regarded as one of the main reasons behind the

failure of the project. Salih links the response of the tribespeople to their aloofness and desire to avoid interaction with strangers who are usually attracted to this fertile land⁽⁴⁾.

The lack of concern about, and understanding of, the nature of the location required for settlement by traditional societies also causes difficulties. This is exemplified by the case of the Beja group living in Kassala (referred to in the first part of the Chapter Seven) who insisted on settling illegally in a central location.

An official policy which is more responsive towards social and psychological requirements of traditional societies could contribute significantly towards the overcoming of these kinds of problems. For example, the Beja could be accommodated at the closed ends of towns, and not those directions along which such towns are going to be developed. Or the Beja's housing areas could be separated from those inhabited by other culturally dissimilar groups, but using non-residential landuses such as market places as separators. On the other hand, the problems associated with the settlements of the Rashaidaa could be partially overcome by ensuring that this tribe is accommodated in central locations.

Other problems ensue from the rigid and arbitrary manner in which space is provided for both the Beja and Rashaidaa. These are linked to overcrowding, as well as under utilization of both private and public space. Overcrowding is causing environmental problems, whether the curtailment of ventilation, or the public health

problems resulting from the congestion in certain parts of the dwelling space. On the other hand the under utilization of space also causes environmental problems which result from the aggravation of the effects of both direct solar radiation and dust storms. It is also economically inefficient because it raises the initial cost of housing areas as a result of the unnecessary sprawling of housing land.

The provision of higher or lower space standards than is required by the two groups is also causing serious social problems. This mainly derives from the fact that the space provided does not facilitate the development of the environmental patterns and forms required by each tribe - as explained in detail in the previous chapter (7.1 and 7.2). As the social system of these tribes is strongly linked to their economic system, such problems will have negative effects on their economy.

The adoption of more rational space standards, which are linked to the actual requirements of these tribal groups, could contribute substantially towards the overcoming of these various problems cited above. In general terms, this could be achieved through providing the Beja with higher space standards than those adopted for public space, and lower standards for private space. Similarly it could also be achieved through providing the Rashaidaa with higher standards for housing plots. Providing space in this more sensitive manner would also ensure community participation in the development and maintenance of public space as demonstrated by the many cases from the housing areas examined in the previous chapter.

10. The rigid general planning of the housing area, and inflexible Building Regulations controlling the development of public space also create their own problems. Such problems, which are characteristic of the Beja housing areas, follow mainly from the erection of communal places - used for accommodation of boys - in public space in an illegal way. This practice leads to the public health, environmental and traffic problems referred to in the first part of this chapter.

The illegal erection of communal building in public space can be overcome by providing public space according to the actual and specific requirements of the inhabitants. This means that an area intended for a Beja group should be provided with space for places like the guest houses, Quranic schools and communal residences of the young men. This must be related to an attempt to plan the overall housing area in a manner which is responsive to the social needs and cultural values of the inhabitants. For example, in an area intended for housing a Beja group, the large open space allocated for public facilities should be situated in the forefront of the area, and secondary public open spaces at the edges (Fig. 8.1 below). These measures will ensure that the inhabitants can receive their guests without diminishing the privacy of their women. It will also allow the rearing of boys according to the cultural norms of the tribe.

The layout of the types of housing blocks provided for both the Beja and Rashaidaa is identical with regard to the number of housing plots contained within these blocks, as the number of plots

vary from four to twenty two (Fig. 4.3). A planner who was more responsive to the social characteristics of the inhabitants should lay out the blocks intended for each one of these tribes in a different manner. For example, the number of housing plots in a block aimed to accommodate the Beja should be kept to the minimum, i.e. four plots. This will always ensure that the households accommodated in the block are very closely related - those of a father and his sons, or a group of brothers. Although such a planning measure escalates the demand for public space, because it increases the number of roads, this could be compensated for by reducing the size of housing plots as the demand of the Beja for space here is not high.

For the Rashaidaa, the number of housing plots should be high; six or more. This will enable the Rashaidaa man to accommodate his co-wives near to each other, and make it possible for his sons to encircle his household. In this way the people can satisfy important religious and social requirements.

An official practice which is more sensitive to the socio-cultural characteristics of the inhabitants would not have laid out the housing blocks intended for both the Beja and Rashaidaa in the same manner - a set of pairs of plots arranged back to back. A layout which is aimed to support the social life of the Rashaidaa would have created a semi-public open space within the block - through the omission of one or two of the plots located towards the middle of the block (Fig. 8.2 below). Such open space would be appropriate for accommodating the social occasions organized by the

closely related households living in the block, which involve selected categories of the kinspeople living in the housing area, for instance the celebration of the circumcision of boys.

✓ Certain clauses which form part of the current rigid Building Regulations - those requiring the erection of high boundary walls between adjacent plots lead to the impairment of social life, and curtailment of co-operation between Rashaidaa households who live together in the same housing block. Despite all these problems, and the fact that the Rashaidaa rely primarily on social norms and a traditional system of sanctions to regulate interaction at this level of dwelling space, many of the tribespeople have had to spend a sizeable proportion of the funds allocated for constructing their houses in building these walls in order to comply with the Building Regulations.

By basing the housing policy on a phenomenological, rather than, a positivistic approach we can ensure that the regulations controlling the development of space will contribute towards supporting the social and cultural life, and facilitating co-operation between the households living within the same housing block. But, this could only be achieved, when, in line with the phenomenological approach, we base the classification of housing land on an ethnic or socio-cultural dimension, and thus ensure that adjacent households belong to the same socio-cultural group.

By linking the space standards of the housing plots intended for accommodating households from different tribes to the actual

specific needs of these tribes, we can contribute towards overcoming various misfits resulting from the rigid standards adopted by the official policy. For example, by reducing the size of the plot intended for accommodating the Beja, we can ensure that the small amount of space required here is well utilized and developed within the meagre financial resources of this tribe. This will also reduce the perimeter of the plot and accordingly save on the funds allocated for building the boundary walls which are considered essential for securing the highly regarded privacy of the families living inside such plots. The reduction of the size of the plot will also help to diminish the effect of direct solar radiation and ensure that a reasonable proportion of the courtyard of the house is shaded by the buildings.

Regarding the demand of the Rashaidaa for private space, by accommodating households from this tribe in large housing plots, we ensure that the men are able to keep their co-wives together in the same place, and thus allow them to satisfy important religious and social requirements. The accommodation of the co-wives in this manner enhances the co-operation between their households and benefits the economy of the extended family - as explained in the two previous chapters.

It would have been possible to contribute substantially towards the social and psychological well-being of the Beja and Rashaidaa if the shapes of housing plots allotted for them were aimed at attaining these objectives. An alternative policy which gave special consideration to the social and cultural

characteristics of the inhabitants would have provided different shapes of plots for each one of these tribes.

The Beja should have been accommodated in an oblong plot which has a narrow frontage (Fig. 8.3 below). This would enable the people to maintain a wide distance between the rooms of the house and the road, and thus help to protect the private life centred inside these rooms from the public life taking place outside in the road. For the Rashaidaa; an oblong plot which is not very deep and has a wide frontage (Fig. 8.2. below) would be appropriate. This would allow the people to build their houses according to the ideal layout associated with their culture (a row of rooms set side by side), and through this satisfy important social and religious requirements as explained in detail in the two previous chapters. If this plot were oriented in such a way that its wide frontage faced towards the north or south, then the development of the ideal house form would also contribute substantially towards thermal comfort as it would allow high levels of natural ventilation inside the rooms of the house.

Besides its contribution to the social and psychological well-being of the two tribes, the shapes of the housing plots recommended above will also have economic benefits. By adopting the shape recommended for the Rashaidaa it would be possible to construct the house form which facilitates the maximum levels of co-operation between members of the extended family living in the plot. This will enhance the economy of the family and ensure the development of the plot through the co-ordinated contributions of its members. The

shape of the plot recommended for the Beja would serve economic purposes in a different way. The narrow frontage of such plots would shorten the lines of services (water supply and drainage pipes) and thus reduce the overall costs of the services component in the whole housing area⁽⁵⁾.

Certain problems identical in the urban and settled life styles of the Beja and Rashaidaa can be explained by the rigidity of the types of room built to accommodate the elementary families. For example, due to the small size of the windows (about 30 x 30cm in area) in the huts built in traditional construction, levels of ventilation are low and the inside of such huts is uncomfortably hot during summer. This particularly affects the women of the Rashaidaa who have to wear their heavy veils even in this very private place. The same windows cause severe discomfort for the women of the Beja who are obliged to remain most of their time indoors. Due to the low level of the windows (about one meter above ground level) the Beja, who require high levels of privacy for their women, screen off the small windows of the huts and thus this causes them further discomfort.

The types of rooms found in houses designed by architects and draughtsmen, and constructed in non-traditional building materials, such as concrete and imported timber, lead to problems similar to those related to the accommodation of the two tribes in traditional huts. For example, the large windows (about 100cm x 80cm) opened into these rooms diminish the privacy of the women living there and so are incompatible with the strategy adopted by the Beja for

protecting their women. This is manifested in them surrounding the rooms of their houses with expensive walls.

The rooms in the architect-designed houses also raise economic problems because of their rigid sizes. As a result, the Beja have to spend unnecessary money on houses with large rooms which exceed their actual needs. This could have been avoided if the design of the rooms were made in response to the social and cultural requirements of the people living there.

The inflexible shapes of the rooms also lead sometimes to social problems. Our investigation in Chapters Six and Seven has shown how the two tribes arrange furniture and utensils inside their rooms along different axes, and that this is linked to important values. By giving careful consideration to such aspects we could maintain the privacy of the Beja couple living there and enable the women of the Rashaidaa to perform their prominent role in social life.

By basing the planning measures and design process of the house on a phenomenological approach we can help substantially in overcoming the problems arising from misfits that have been described. To achieve this we need to direct research along the lines of this approach in order to provide guidelines and generate prototypes for the various Sudanese socio-cultural groups. This would not only be useful for producing houses using modern materials and techniques, but also in the choice and design of those constructed according to traditional methods. In Chapter Seven we

showed how a house type which is developed by certain traditional groups - such as the mud and thatch huts used and constructed by people of a West African origin in Kassala - does not necessarily suit other culturally dissimilar groups like the Beja.

CONCLUSIONS

It is unlikely that the phenomenological approach and analytic method recommended in this thesis could yield all the basic information required for formulating a comprehensive policy to deal with all the various levels of dwelling space. It is also unlikely that it would be possible, in a short period of time, to set appropriate policies to deal with all the numerous Sudanese socio-cultural groups, because this would have to be preceded by a thorough and lengthy process of investigation. Yet, despite this, adoption of such an approach at the present time could help to generate policy regulations and standards which are more relevant than the current narrow, rigid and uniform ones.

Any slight mismatch between the housing environments generated through a phenomenological approach, and the actual requirements of the inhabitants, should not always be seen as a sign of weakness in the formulation of this approach. It could be attributed to the nature of the phenomena dealt with - the requirements of social and cultural life - which cannot be measured as accurately as those related to physiological comfort or building economics. But, as explained in detail above, the degree of accuracy could be enhanced

✓, 1 - X

by examining several levels of dwelling space before formulating the regulations and standards concerning any of these levels.

It is important that regulations and standards should be revised from time to time, and altered if the need arises. This is to be done through a process of feed-back; by monitoring the impact of the policies on the users. According to the phenomenological approach, the ultimate aim of these policies should be the satisfaction of the social and cultural requirements of the inhabitants, rather than the adherence to any specific pre-chosen environmental patterns or forms. The fact that the period of tenure for the low income people (85% of the total population)⁽⁶⁾ is usually short (20 to 10 years)⁽⁷⁾, and that those population groups build their houses from non-permanent materials, i.e. mud, allows the overall planning of housing areas to be revised if the need arises.

One of the values of the analytic method recommended in this thesis is that it relies mostly on observation rather than on interviews or questionnaires alone. This renders it very useful in investigating traditional societies many of whom cannot communicate in Arabic or English. Moreover, our field work with the Beja ^{the tribes} showed that it is not always possible to gain insight about delicate matters - such as protection of women which is connected to the fear of adultery - if communication with the tribespeople is undertaken through a translator from the same tribe. Thus direct observation permits us to check and supplement information gathered through other means of data collection.

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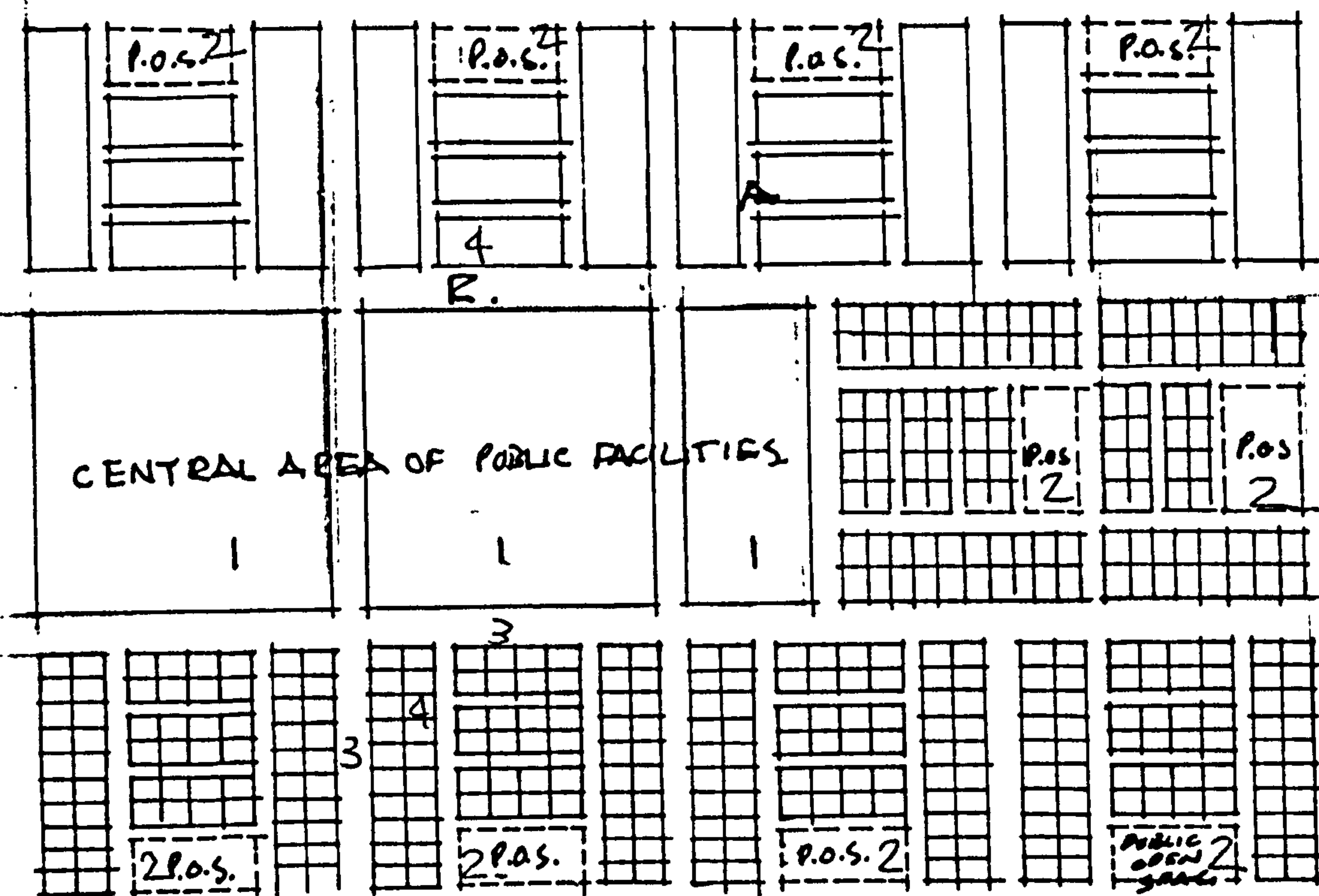


Fig. 8.1. A general layout for a housing area intended for Beja groups (not to scale).

KEY

- 1- Central area of public facilities.
- 2- Secondary public open spaces.
- 3- Roads.
- 4- Housing plots.

(Source: the author)

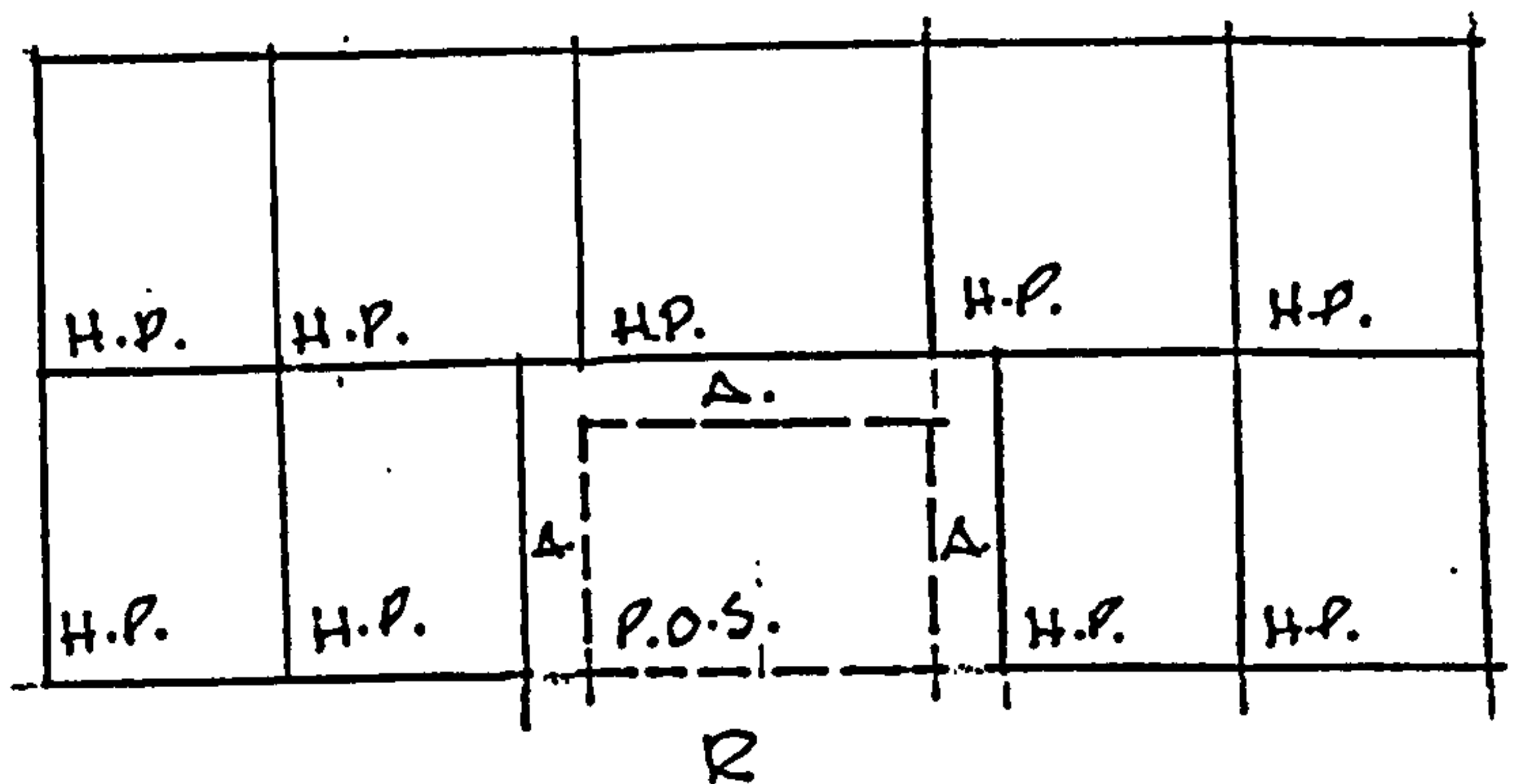


Fig. 8.2. A recommended layout of a housing block intended for accommodating Rashaidaa households (not to scale).

KEY

H.P. Housing plot.
P.O.S. Public open space.

A. Alley way.
R. Road

(Source: the author)

CHAPTER NINE

OFFICIAL DWELLING SPACE POLICIES AND PRACTICE TOWARDS TRADITIONAL SOCIETIES: GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to reach a conclusion about official policies in the Sudan concerning dwelling space, and recommend measures which may make them more appropriate for settling traditional societies. The conclusions and recommendations cover various aspects which have both direct and indirect impacts on the dwelling environment.

The chapter begins by reviewing official policy and considers its three main components: the classification of housing land, space standards, and the building regulations. It then deals with official practice at the levels of planning and of house design. As the education and training of architects and physical planners, and the research into environmental studies, are strongly linked to policy making and practice, the chapter also considers education and research. The chapter ends with general conclusions and recommendations regarding the phenomenological approach and its analytical method.

9.2 OFFICIAL POLICY

9.2.1 The policy towards classification of housing land

It is essential that the classification of the land, intended for settling traditional societies in official housing, should be based on socio-cultural needs of the society, rather than only economic considerations, as is the practice at the present time. This would enable socially related people, who were accommodated together, to pool their resources in order to secure their livelihood and support their economy. Moreover, this kind of co-operation, which is characteristic of traditional societies, could also contribute substantially towards the development and maintenance of housing land. Combining such communal efforts with the slender official resources would help overcome the environmental, public health and economic problems associated with the underdevelopment of this category of land resulting from the application of current policies.

Regarding the classification of housing land in urban areas, it is even more essential here that the settlement of traditional societies should be based on the group's socio-cultural characteristics, because the urban life style usually threatens their cultural integrity and dignity. The adoption of such a policy would facilitate the development of the appropriate physical dwelling environment which could support the social and cultural life of each group. In addition, as the state of the national economy and development plans do not indicate an imminent reversal in the current rural-urban migration, it is advisable that the migrants

should be allowed to adapt themselves gradually during the process of their integration into urban society.

By adopting this policy it would be possible to settle the traditional groups who squat around urban centres, and who constitute more than 40% of their population,⁽¹⁾ without seriously aggravating the current housing problem. This could be achieved through rationing the provision of space, services and allocating resources at each part of the housing land according to the actual requirements of the group settled there. Accordingly, such measures could save vital housing resources and limit the horizontal expansion of the already sprawling urban centres.

A policy which links the classification of housing land to socio-cultural variables should be based on a sound knowledge of the social characteristics of the traditional groups being settled. Certain groups which may appear homogeneous along these dimensions could, in actual fact, be socially segmented to the extent that they would not tolerate living side by side.

The policy would also be based on a sound knowledge of the cultural characteristics of the groups to be housed together. Groups which may appear homogeneous along such variable because they believe in the same religion, could, in fact, be pursuing divergent strategies to achieve similar social objectives. As such variations may strongly affect the amount, as well as the general organization of space (as shown in the case studies of Chapter Seven), the accommodation of culturally dissimilar groups, in this case in the

same housing area, will complicate the process of both allocation of space and physical planning.

If the alternative policy recommended for classifying housing land is to achieve its expected goals, any housing process should necessarily be preceded by a thorough socio-cultural investigation. Besides examining the social fabric of the community to be settled, such an investigation should also study in general terms the social system of the cultural group to whom this community belong. The findings of this investigation should then provide the guidelines for the process of disposition of housing plots.

This preparatory stage is very important. In the case of some tribes (such as the Beja) the tribespeople do not allow their divorced or widowed women to apply for housing plots, as this is regarded as an indication of the inability of the community to protect its women. As a result of this, and despite the important social roles performed by such single women in urban areas, they are not allotted housing plots, and have to live with kinspeople or squat on roads and public open spaces. A housing policy which bases the disposal of housing plots on a sound knowledge of the specific social fabric of the community, and the general social characteristics of its cultural group, would have allotted these women plots. This would help maintain the cultural integrity and dignity of the community.

It could be argued that the classification of housing land in the manner recommended above may slow down the integration of the

various traditional groups into a culturally homogeneous Sudanese nation. In a similar way, the current official policies and the uniform environments which they generate may be defended on the grounds that they are vital means for achieving national unity - an important objective which any housing initiatives should take into consideration.

To defend the proposed system of classification in specific terms, and the phenomenological approach in general, we must point out that the adoption of this system, together with thoughtful planning satisfying the social and cultural requirements of the inhabitants, will encourage interaction between various traditional groups living together in urban and rural centres. The people of these groups will be more willing to meet and spend longer time in central public places - like the town square or market - because their families left behind in the housing areas are well protected and looked after. For the same reasons, the inhabitants will be more willing to receive guests from other social and cultural groups within their housing areas.

It is important to recognize that traditional societies may undergo social change due to interaction and inter-marriage between various groups, and this will consequently reflect on the dwelling environment. One of the points of strength of the phenomenological approach - if well understood as outlined in the philosophy of Heidegger - is that it recognizes this phenomenon and is equipped to deal with it. If the various traditional groups evolved through time into a homogeneous socio-cultural entity, then official policies

could be aimed at producing more uniform dwelling environments. Until this takes place, the groups should be allowed to adapt gradually to modern life styles, and in a way such that nothing diminishes their cultural integrity and dignity.

9.2.2. The policy towards allocation of dwelling space

By linking the classification of housing land to specific socio-cultural variables it would be possible to determine the amount of space required for each part of this land with a higher degree of accuracy, than if this classification is based on economic variables alone. This could only be achieved if the amount of both private and public space is determined according to the actual requirements of each socio-cultural group being housed.

The size of the housing plot should be determined by the age and sex groups of the elementary family who may live together there according to cultural norms. If some of these groups are accommodated in communal places, space should not be provided for them in the housing plot. The size of the plot should also be determined by the cultural norms controlling the reception, entertainment and accommodation of guests - whether this takes place in the house or in special public places. These factors substantially affect space requirements for each elementary family. On the other hand, in compliance with cultural norms and values, more than one family may expect to live close to each. Thus, when allocating space for housing plots this also should be taken into consideration. Alternatively, to maintain specific desirable levels of privacy, the family living in a plot may need to keep a certain

distance from adjacent households and surrounding roads. Accordingly, some open space may have to be provided around the built-up part of the plot.

When providing space for public land uses it is important to consider the family age groups and the kinspeople who may be accommodated there as demanded by cultural norms. If children are accommodated in a mosque, or guests are received at road sides in front of the houses or in coffee houses, then the space standards of these public areas should allow for this. Thus the amount of space required should be computed according to the actual activities, and specific functions of these public places. The adoption of such a policy does not necessarily increase the overall demand for dwelling space. In the cases just mentioned it would be compensated by a reduction in the standards of private space. The main aim of this proposed policy is to allocate space in a rational rather than arbitrary manner. To achieve this, private and public space should be regarded as complementing each other.

Public space should be provided for the communal land uses which are actually required by the cultural group living in the housing area, and not according to standardised areas as currently allocated in official planning. This should take into consideration the specific informal social and cultural institutions which use public space.

9.2.3 The policy aimed at controlling development of dwelling space.

The current rigid building regulations which control the development of both public and private space should be replaced with others that are more flexible and which better respond to the actual requirements of traditional societies. If, as recommended above, housing land is classified according to socio-cultural characteristics, then the regulations aimed at the housing areas of cultural groups of whom the young men and guests reside in public space should legalize erection of communal residential places. This will ensure community participation in the development and maintenance of public space and thus help to overcome the environmental and public health problems associated with underdevelopment and poor maintenance of this space as referred to in Chapter One.

The rigid regulations aimed at controlling the development of private dwelling space may also cause several kinds of problems for certain cultural groups. For example, the regulations requiring erection of boundary walls between adjacent housing plots may curtail the social and economic life of groups among whom co-operation between neighbouring households is dependant on direct access and visual contact. Moreover, compliance to such regulations will, in this case, result in the creation of narrow and useless alleys around the built-up parts of the plot, rather than permitting the formation of common courtyards between adjacent plots through the abolition of boundary walls (Fig. 9.1).

The regulations which determine the minimum size and volume of individual rooms should be replaced by others that are more flexible and ^{responsive} (a better response) to the specific requirements of traditional societies. Our investigation in this thesis into certain traditional house forms - those of the Beja and Nuba (reviewed in Chapter Three and Six) - shows that such rooms ² tents and huts in the case of these tribes - may be small in size because they are inhabited and used by the married couple and their young children. They are thus regarded as being of an appropriate size. Moreover, the small size of these places, their low height and smallness of entrance, are considered as important restrictive measures in limiting social interaction there. They thus ensure the high levels of privacy required for this intimate place. If the planning of housing areas and building regulations permit the erection of communal places for accommodating grown up children and guests, as practiced by these cultural groups, the tribespeople can manage with rooms which are smaller than those specified by the ^{building} regulations without leading to overcrowding.

It may not be practical to set building regulations for all the numerous Sudanese socio-cultural groups, but it could be possible to begin the formulation of some for the major tribal units, i.e. the Baggara, Beja, ⁴ Sothern Nilotic (Dinka, Nuir and Shilluk) and the Moslem Nilotic of Northern and Central Sudan (Shaigia, Jaaleen, Rubatab, etc.). There are certain similarities in the traditional planning and house types of the tribes subsumed within each broad tribal group, which justifies the formulation of a set of regulations for each one of these groups.⁽²⁾ Such regulations would,

at least be less arbitrary than the current ones, and respond more to the specific needs of the societies to be housed. The formulation of alternative regulations for the various regions of the country, the territories of the major tribal groups (Fig. 3), will be compatible with the general political trend towards regionalism and devolution of the central planning and executive authorities. Thus this process could be readily incorporated within the official policies aimed at achieving these national objectives.

Linking the building regulations to the socio-cultural characteristics of the inhabitants will bring the policy in line with that aimed at the classification of housing land. Our investigation in this thesis reveals that social norms, values and sanctions are used in controlling interaction within housing areas in a similar manner to the measures required by the building regulations - such as those demanding erection of boundary walls. Thus by formulating a specific set of regulations for each broad cultural group, it should be possible to integrate the components of the physical environment with the norms of the socio-cultural system, in order to maintain the desirable levels of interaction.

9.3 OFFICIAL PHYSICAL PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

With regards to the official practice at the regional level, and concerning certain Sudanese tribes, it is important to maintain the socio-physical space within which the branches and clans of the tribe live in their territory. The reason is that the organization of this space could strongly be linked to the socio-political life, as well as the security and psychological well-being of the tribe.

Thus any process aimed at resettling these branches and clans should take the nature of this space into consideration. Accordingly, the economic and other expected benefits which may result from such re-settlement should be weighed against the anticipated disruption that could affect the smlife of the whole tribe to which the re-settled group belongs.

The lack of response to the specific social requirements and psychological needs of the groups being re-settled can discourage such groups from migrating, or lead subsequently to counter-migration. This is exemplified by the Sudanese Nubians who resisted migration in 1966 and stayed in the Old Nubia despite the danger of the rising water and the extremely limited potential for supporting livelihood and economy there.⁽³⁾ It is further exemplified by the re-settled Nubians who returned later to their old home, despite the meagre resources and difficult existence there in comparison to the available amenities and relatively easy life of the re-settlement area.

Any decision involving the choice of a location intended for settling a traditional group should not be based on economic, environmental and public health criteria alone, but must also consider the specific requirements necessary to ensure the social and psychological well-being of such a group. For example, when assessing a central location, the assessment should consider whether the group will tolerate high levels of interaction with the people living around such location. In certain cases a less central location could be more appropriate for a cultural group which is by

nature conservative and aloof.

The element of landscape should also be considered. But assessment along this dimension should not be based only on general criteria - such as the economic and environmental benefits and standard aesthetic qualities. It must also look into the way the landscape may contribute towards the life of the group to be settled there. This means that a natural location which is generally judged as inhospitable might, nevertheless be found appropriate for settling certain groups who require privacy. By its very inhospitality, such a location will discourage intruders and thus help to safeguard the territory of the people settled there.

When preparing a town plan it is important to separate the quarters allocated for various traditional groups by a physical distance proportionate to the social distance separating the tribes to which such groups belong. Moreover, the quarters intended for groups which are not socially related and whose cultures are incompatible, and which, for practical reasons, have to be accommodated side by side, should be separated by non-residential land uses such as shopping or recreational facilities.

In the planning of housing blocks, the number of plots in each block should be determined according to the number of closely related families who may live as near to each other as cultural norms and values require. To respond to the requirements of the social life of the households living there, it may be necessary to integrate a public open space within the block (Fig. 8).

The shape of the housing plot should be determined by the norms controlling the spatial relations between the families living there as one household. This is also determined by the desirable levels of privacy for this household which may necessitate maintaining a distance from adjacent households and surrounding roads.

The shape, internal spatial organization and openings of individual rooms intended to accommodate an elementary family should be determined mainly by the desirable levels of privacy required for, and degree of autonomy granted to, such families. They should also take into account the nature and layout of the domestic appliances likely to be used inside the rooms.

9.4 OFFICIAL RESEARCH IN HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES.

In view of the serious problems ensuing from the official policies towards dwelling space, the experience of the National Housing Commission (referred to in Chapter One) shows the value of adopting a scientific approach towards the current housing problem. Nevertheless, despite this one of the main conclusions and recommendations put forward by the Commission indicates the limitation of its general approach. We refer to the recommendation regarding the reduction of the size of the housing plot.⁽⁴⁾

Our investigations in this thesis have demonstrated that the implementation of this recommendation for certain cultural groups, which require large housing plots, could lead to serious social,

environmental and public health problems. Our investigation also indicates that, with regard to such groups, contributions to overcoming the current housing problem could be made through the reduction of public and not private dwelling space. Thus such a recommendation, which concerns one of the major components of the overall housing policy, shows the insensitivity of the approach of the Commission towards the cultural diversity of the Sudanese people. This could perhaps be explained by the constitution of the Commission and its technical committees which did not include any specialists from fields such as anthropology or psychology.⁽⁵⁾

Our investigation into the nature of dwelling space has revealed the complexity of its constitution which is manifested in the organic interconnection between its various elements and levels. It has also shown the strong link between the constitution of this space and the various dimensions of human existence: economic, social, cultural, spiritual and psychological. Thus any investigation which aims to establish the base for formulating appropriate official policies should necessarily be fully multidisciplinary in nature.

This means that any such investigation should consider dwelling space in terms of all the various dimensions of human existence, and in terms of all the levels and elements of dwelling environment cited in detail in Chapter Five. The handling of the problem in such a manner, however, should not lead to the dissection of dwelling space into isolated fragments. It is important to deal with dwelling space in an integrated and holistic way. It should be considered as

an existential space in line with the concept formulated by Norberg-Schulz and examined in Chapter Five. By following these guidelines it will be possible to contribute to the formulation of policies which are more responsive and acceptable to traditional peoples.

We therefore recommend the formation of a national council for housing and environmental studies entrusted with overseeing research and the setting up of policies in this field. Through this, it would be possible to bring together highly qualified and experienced specialists from the various disciplines related to the dwelling environment. Over and above the architects, physical planners, engineers and specialists in building economics, the membership of this council and its advisory committees should also include others from fields like landscape design and planning, interior design, anthropology, ethnology, sociology and psychology.

The national council and its technical advisory committees could sponsor and direct research into dwelling space in such a way as to enable it to set space standards, formulate building regulations, and prepare planning and designs of house types that suit the major cultural groups in the country in the manner explained above. In its pursuit of these objectives, the council should aim at co-ordinating the efforts of the research institutions working in the field of the environment. In this respect, it would be necessary to direct and broaden the research aimed at improving traditional construction techniques - such as the compacted earth type of construction - so that it also considers the social and cultural dimensions of this category of buildings.

In addition to the national council, it would be desirable to establish regional councils which would serve as a link between the national council and the executive bodies responsible for implementing the national policies in the various regions of the country. Through the regional councils, it would be possible to monitor closely the adherence of the local authorities to the set policies, as well as the responses of the people ^{on whom} where the policies are being implemented. Accordingly, qualified specialists should be appointed to these councils so as to ensure feedback to the national council. Through this process the national council could revise its policies if the need arise.

This process of feedback would be essential if the whole policy was to be genuinely based on a phenomenological approach. Such a policy should be primarily concerned with preserving the integrity and dignity of traditional people, rather than any set planning patterns, space standards or building regulations. Accordingly, there should always be certain means by which it would be possible to verify whether these patterns, standards and regulations were actually serving the main objectives of the policy.

9.5 EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF ARCHITECTS AND PHYSICAL PLANNERS.

The lack of awareness amongst architects and physical planners of the needs of traditional societies is one of the reasons behind the failure of current official policies and practice. In order to help overcome this, we should start by revising the western oriented

academic curricula and training courses planned for qualifying these specialists.

The relationship between the human being and his environment is very complex. It affects among other things the social, cultural, psychological, spiritual facets of his life. Accordingly, the training of architects, physical planners and other specialists in fields related to the dwelling environment - particularly at the advanced levels of post-graduate studies - should be of a multi-disciplinary nature. It should aim at providing a basic knowledge about the relationship between the physical environment and other traditional systems which distinguish each cultural group, such as those that pertain to its social and cultural characteristics.

The awareness of architects and physical planners about traditional societies and their specific needs could be achieved by including in the curricula covering classical styles, certain ancient Sudanese planning and architectural styles such as that of the Nubian people. In a similar way Sudanese contemporary traditional styles could be taught side by side with modern western ones. Sudanese traditional house types could also be considered as part of the curricula dealing with theory of design. In all these cases there should be a special emphasis on linking socio-cultural characteristics to planning patterns and built forms.

In order to enable the undergraduate students to gain a better understanding of traditional societies and their specific housing

needs, the studio programmes aimed at examining rural housing should deal with the subject in depth. This could be achieved by extending the investigation into the built environment in order to cover the socio-cultural characteristics of the groups being considered. The student should be advised about the consultation of available literature, and try to express pertinent socio-cultural characteristics in terms of planning patterns and architectural forms - the whole exercise^{is} to be regarded as a means of familiarizing the students with the traditions of peoples demonstrated through the strong links between social values and norms and dwelling space.

Research at the post-graduate level should be directed towards investigating the impact of current housing policies on traditional societies. It should consider these societies within the context of both their rural and urban life styles. Such investigation could yield vital information concerning^{the} appropriate policies for each respective cultural group being examined. This research would also shed some light on the relation between traditional people and the environment. In general terms, the findings of these investigations could supply an invaluable source of information for policy makers, facilitating as it does the revision of official policies through a process of feedback.

9.6 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Sudanese traditional groups speak more than one hundred local languages.⁽⁶⁾ This obviously impairs communication and accordingly makes the task of official policy makers more difficult.

Our recommended phenomenological approach would help to overcome this difficulty, because in communicating with these groups it does not rely on spoken language alone. Through its analytical methods it investigates dwelling space and tries to identify the needs and aspirations of the people. By allowing the translation of these needs and aspirations into environmental patterns and forms, through the formulation of the appropriate policies, it makes it possible for each cultural group to communicate with the outside world and thus to express its identity and enjoy cultural integrity.

Considering the cultural diversity of the Sudanese people, the phenomenological approach can provide a good base for formulating the appropriate housing policies and any other policies which have a strong impact on the social life of traditional societies. This can contribute towards resolving serious political and social problems resulting from the insensitivity of the national policies to ethnic and regional minorities - as exemplified by the civil war that has been taking place in the southern part of the country for almost three decades.

The investigation in this thesis demonstrates that culturally dissimilar Moslem groups may adopt different strategies to satisfy basic religious requirements such as protection of women. Among other aspects of the life of these groups, this reflects remarkably upon the organization and use of dwelling space.

Should the planners adhere to traditional patterns and forms or should they innovate? Should they plan housing areas and design

dwellings which suit users, or should they stick to internationally accepted patterns and forms? These are questions which confront the architects and physical planners who deal with traditional societies. Our phenomenological approach offers a way out of this dilemma. The practitioners are free to invent any patterns and forms provided that the ensuing dwelling environments are supportive to the social and cultural life of the inhabitants. This can only be achieved through a sound knowledge of, and full respect for, the specific social and cultural requirements of those inhabitants.

If traditional groups are provided with the appropriate types of dwelling environments, they will be more willing to interact with each other and with other culturally dissimilar groups. Considering the Sudanese peoples as one nation, this will enhance social cohesion, political stability and economic development. Our investigations in this thesis have suggested this in more than one way and they have also shown that the accommodation of various Sudanese traditional groups in a uniform type of environment is unlikely to contribute to the accomplishment of these national objectives.

The main case studies in the thesis examined Arab or Arabized Moslem tribes, and the findings may not be appropriate for formulating policies for socially and culturally dissimilar Sudanese groups. Further investigations covering Negro or Negroid groups, or those of different religions, may lead to different findings especially with regards to the major socio-cultural characteristics affecting the organization of dwelling space. In general terms,

these would help to shed more light on the nature of the relationship between human existence and space.

By considering various levels and elements of dwelling space, our research has dealt extensively with this space but it has not been possible to examine each one of these levels and elements in depth. An investigation which focuses on only one of these components, i.e. the individual room or tent, can reveal more information about the social and cultural characteristics of the tribes. It can allow a Heideggerian poetical investigation.

Our work has shown that, although of a high importance, the physical environment is not always of the greatest significance for regulating social life and interaction within housing areas. For some cultural groups, social norms and values, and more tangible aspects of the culture such as tribal costumes, also play a central role. Though this may be disappointing to architects, physical planners and other specialists working the field of the environment, this phenomenon should be examined, well understood and integrated in official policies and practice.

Our close examination of the dwelling space of the Beja and Rashaidaa revealed that the colour and texture of the material of their tents, as well as their general form, are linked to aspects of social and cultural life. In the nomadic setting, these aesthetic factors contribute to camouflaging the tents of the Beja and making those of the Rashaidaa more conspicuous. Within each of these tribes, such effects, along with the organization of space, take a

central place in the tribe's social and cultural strategies. Thus by extending the phenomenological enquiry to include the aesthetic dimension of the dwelling environment an even deeper insight into the lives and needs of traditional societies could be gained.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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FIGURES

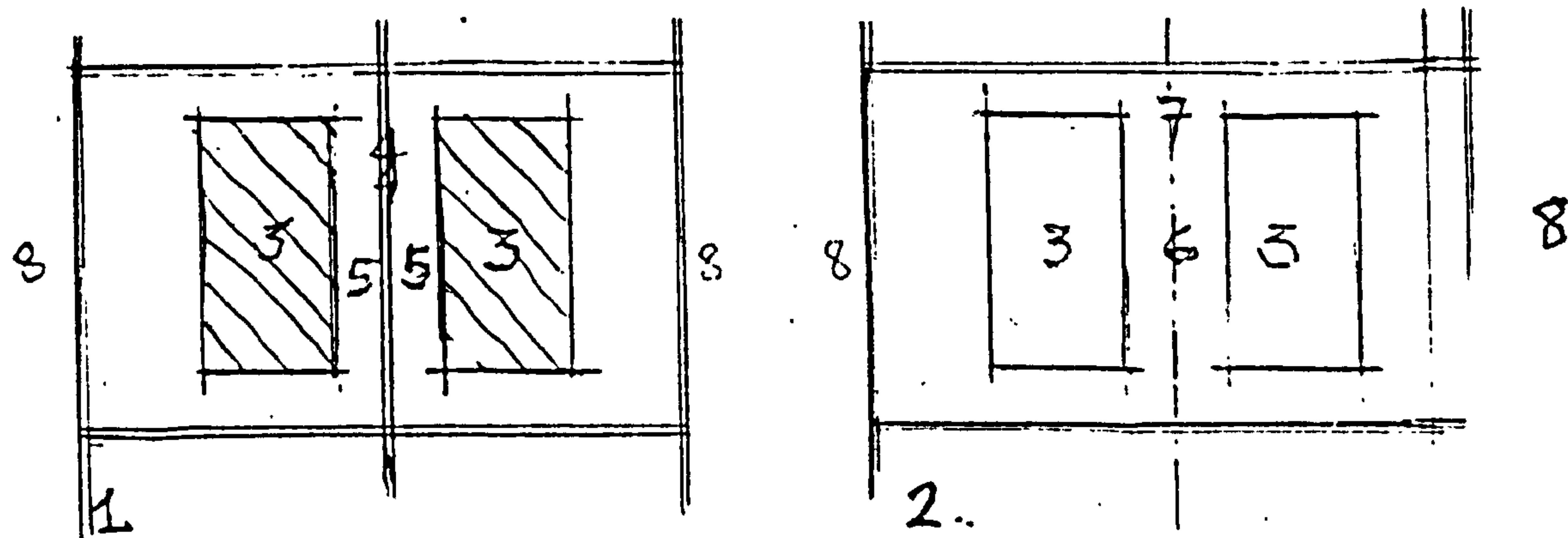


Fig. 9.1 (Not to scale)

KEY

- 1- Closely related households living in separated adjacent plots.
- 2- Closely related households living in amalgamated adjacent plots.
- 3- The built-up part of the plot.
- 4- Separating boundary wall.
- 5- Narrow alley.
- 6- Common subsidiary court yard.
- 7- Line of boundary between adjacent plots.
- 8- Road.

(Source: the author)

APPENDIX (A): THE SUDANESE NUBIANS, THEIR ORIGINAL HOMELAND, SOCIO-CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS AND INDIGENOUS DWELLING ENVIRONMENT.

The extensive archaeological investigation undertaken in Nubia prior to its flooding revealed enormously valuable information about the history of this region, from Pharaonic times to the Christian period, and also the later Muslim era. Numerous spectacular temples and statuary, which formed part of the landscape in the flooded area, for as long as four thousand years, are evidence of the Pharaonic times. This era was also the source of various legends which enriched, in no small measure, the ritual and cultural life of this tribe. Moreover, the Pharaonic architecture was clearly reflected in the house form which was built and used by the Nubians during the twentieth century.⁽¹⁾

The impact of the Ancient Greeks on the Nubian culture is partly evident in the use of the Greek language for writing religious texts.⁽²⁾ As part of their influence in the region, the Ancient Romans had introduced the water wheel, which made a very important contribution to the local economy.⁽³⁾ It may not be easy to identify the cultural influence of past eras on contemporary Nubians. In this respect Fernia comments that, "the threads of historical experiences"⁽⁴⁾, ensuing from contacts with ancient civilizations and other cultures, are woven so tightly into the cultural life of contemporary Nubians that "specific debts to past (eras) can scarcely be identified".⁽⁵⁾

During the sixth century A.D. Nubia became part of the Christian world. In the beginning missionaries sent from Constantinople converted local leaders, and then spread the new religion throughout the whole region. As a result of this, the area along the Nile from Aswan to Dongola (Fig. A.1.) was unified under one king. The conversion of the Nubians to Christianity has had a certain effect on the socio-political life of the inhabitants. Some archaeological evidence suggests that this had created a wealthy clerical hierarchy which possessed considerable secular authority. In addition to this, the conversion of these people to Christianity at this time shows in the use of certain names, as well as some customs, legends and folk art motifs. Regarding the impact of Christianity and the cultural heritage associated with it, Fernia argues that various parts of Nubia could not have been equally affected by this external influence because of the relative isolation of these parts and difficulties of transportation and communication. (6)

In the seventh century the Moslem Arabs who ruled Egypt invaded and conquered Nubia. However, instead of pressing the spread of Islam in the conquered land, they signed a peace treaty with Nubia and withdrew back to Egypt. As part of this treaty, the Nubians were supposed to supply the Arab rulers with slaves and allow Arab traders to settle there and practice Islam. (7)

Despite the peace treaty, in the eleventh century some Arab groups forcibly settled in the northern part of Nubia in the area around Aswan. Consequently, the new settlers intermarried with the

local population. As a result of this, a distinct ethnic Nubian group was formed which was called Beni Kanz (the sons of Kanz in Arabic) which became later the Kunuz. This name was used in reference to a famous chief of an Arab group to which the new settlers belonged. As part of this process of intermarriage, the Arabs brought with them their religion (Islam), as well as their tribal socio-political system. In return, and as they were assimilated into the local population, the Arabs and their offspring adopted the Nubian language and much of the indigenous culture.⁽⁸⁾

During the period from the mid thirteenth to the early sixteenth century, and in an effort to control the country and spread Islam, the Mamelukes who ruled Egypt in that time, established military garrisons in the region which later became the district of the Fadija Nubians. The soldiers of these garrisons were mostly from Bosnia, Hungary and other countries in Eastern Europe. During their long period of stay in Nubia, these servicemen intermarried extensively with the local population, and accordingly affected their ethnic set-up in a substantial way. As a result of this interaction, the descendants of these foreign soldiers men formed an aristocracy and "retained considerable local authorities among some Nubian communities". This was reflected on the social system of the Nubians who inhabited this region.⁽⁹⁾

By the beginning of the sixteenth century and for a period of about three hundred years the Mameluke exercised little control over the southern parts of Nubia - the districts which were later inhabited by the Fadija and Mahas. The religious influence of the

Moslem state in Egypt was diminished as teaching centres in this region were closed. The spread, and the practice of Islam, were further curtailed because the local inhabitants could not read and write Arabic - the language by which the Quran is written. The religious belief was so weak among the southern Nubians that some historians considered their adherence to Islam at that time as just a means of escaping enslavement by the Arabs who lived in the region. Islam does not allow a Moslem to enslave another Moslem.⁽¹⁰⁾

The diminished control of the Mamelukes in Nubia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries encouraged the Arab nomadic tribes which previously advanced towards the Sevanah belt of the Sudan to thrust towards the Nile banks.⁽¹¹⁾ As a result of this, the Nubians who lived along the Nile to the south of the Mahas district were Arabaised. New tribes - such as the Dangalla and Shaigia (Fig. 1.5) - formed as a result of this interaction.⁽¹²⁾ In pursuit of reinforcing the religious beliefs in their new territory, the Arab settlers established centres for teaching Islam which attracted scholars from various parts of the Islamic world.⁽¹³⁾ The importance of these centres was increased as the Haj (pilgrimage) route, linking the western and central parts of Africa to the holy places of Islam, was made to cross the territory of the new Arab settlers.⁽¹⁴⁾

The Mahas Nubians living to the north of the Dangalla and Shaigia districts were also affected by the Islamic movement in those districts. This is evident in the great concern of the people of this Nubian sub-tribe for segregation of women. It is also

reflected in the general layout of the Mahas house type.⁽¹⁵⁾ The Fadija Nubians, whose district was separated from those of the Dangalla and Shaigia by the hardly tractable area of Batn el Haggar, were less affected by this Islamic movement. This is clear from their lack of close adherence to the requirements of Islam especially those regarding protection of women and the maintenance of their privacy.⁽¹⁶⁾

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Mamelukes were defeated and Egypt became part of the Turkish Empire. The new rulers provided protection for the Nubians against the Arab tribes but did very little in order to manage the region. From that time onwards, the Nubians were left alone to manage their own affairs.⁽¹⁷⁾ The decision to re-settle them in Khashm el-Girba marks the only major act of intervention in their affairs by a central government during the modern times.

It is important to point out that, during their interaction with the Moslem groups, the Nubians did not give up their indigenous culture. Despite the fact that they were converted to Islam and adopted some of the social and cultural characteristics of those groups, the local population retained their indigenous language and many aspects of their Nubian culture. This was the result mainly of the cultural norms organizing the household type in their villages. In compliance with such norms, the children of the Moslem men who intermarried with them were brought up in the houses of their Nubian mothers. Thus, the offspring and future generations of these men were gradually assimilated into the Nubian communities and culture.⁽¹⁸⁾

As a result of the interaction of the Arab nomadic tribes referred to above with the local population in Nubia, the Nubian elements in the area were diminished. Before the flooding of the area the Nubians amounted to about 120,000.⁽¹⁹⁾ The tribespeople lived along the Nile banks in the region extending from the town of Aswan in Egypt to a point several kilometres to the north of the town of Dongola in the Sudan. The part of Nubia which was flooded by the Nile waters stretches from the location of the High Dam to a point 95 km, to the south of the border line between the two neighbouring countries (Fig. A.1).

The climate of Nubia before the flooding of the area and the creation of the large lake resulting from the building of the High Dam, was characterized by a wide variation between the maximum temperature in summer which rises to 42°C and the minimum in winter which drops at night to 7°C.⁽²⁰⁾ Rainfall is a very rare event (annual rainfall less than 5"). In addition to the uncomfortable summer weather conditions, the Nubians had to cope also with the chilly winter nights, and cold winter northerly winds, living as they did in houses which were not equipped with mechanical heating means. Generally, the climate of Nubia was very harsh to live in.

Before the flooding of Nubia, throughout the whole region the villages were located in a unique linear arrangement (Plat. A. 1). This was partly determined by the geography, topography and economy of the region. The villages had to be built along the narrow strip of cultivatable green land squeezed between the river and desert. Consequently, the houses of each village - especially in the Fadija

and Mahas districts - were strung out in a linear pattern (Plates A.1 to A.2). The archaeological evidence shows that the Nubian villages had been assembled in this manner since the times of the Ancient Egyptians (Fig. A. 2).⁽²¹⁾ This, considered together with the fact that Nubia is flanked by vast deserts on both its east and west sides, led to the relative isolation of the Nubians from other Sudanese cultural groups.

According to Dafalla, such factors may explain the conservative nature and aloofness of the Nubians.⁽²²⁾ The linear placement of the villages along the river had also made communication difficult for the inhabitants living in different parts of the region. This was intensified because parts of the rivers and its banks were very rocky and hardly navigable or tractable (Plate A. 3). Thus, most of the Nubians, especially the Fadija and Mahas, were separated from each other by a wide social distance (as they were not organized in terms of clearly distinguished social units) and several physical barriers.

The size of the villages in Nubia varied from a few hundred to merely five or six houses. This size differed from district to district of the Nubian sub-tribes. However, its size varied also within the same district. The size of Kunuz village, for example, varied according to the size of available flat land at the rocky river banks where the houses were built in a cluster (Plate A. 4). The river banks in the Fadija district in contrast were not rocky. Accordingly the flat land available there permitted the building of large villages. The size of Fadija villages reached that of several

hundred houses which extended for miles along the river banks (Plate A.2). In the Mahas district in the southern part of Nubia, the linear pattern of the villages was often interrupted by rocky out-croppings which extended down to the edge of the river. Due to this feature, the size of some villages were limited to just a few houses. Based on what is stated above, we can conclude that the size of the villages in Nubia was, to a great extent, determined by topography.⁽²³⁾

The linear layout of the dwellings in the Nubian villages, and the setting out of these dwellings as near as possible to the river and not very deep in the desert (Plates A.1. and 2.), could be seen as a response to important psychological and spiritual demands. The Nubians believed that good spirits inhabited the Nile (they called them the angels of the river), and that evil spirits lived in the desert.⁽²⁴⁾ They also believed that their palm trees were blessed and accordingly palm fronds were used in various occasions such as weddings and funerals and were placed at the head of graves (Plate A.5.)⁽²⁵⁾ Thus, the layout of the Nubian village and the setting out of the dwellings ensured proximity to the angels of the river and kept the people away from the demons of the desert.

The layout of the Nubian houses and villages were a response to particular socio-economic conditions which had prevailed in Nubia prior to its flooding. The narrow strip of cultivatable land and limited resources in the region forced the young and able-bodied men to migrate for work in order to support the tribe.⁽²⁶⁾ Thus, the villages were mainly inhabited by old men, women and children. Such

a demographic set-up, considered together with the religious requirements regarding the segregation and protection of women, and also the special concern about the demands of hospitality to guests, complicated the house design and village planning. ^{process} Due to the cultural variations referred to above, each of the Nubian sub-tribes had dealt with the situation differently as explained in detail below. (27)

The linear layout of the Nubian villages - especially in the Fadija and Mahas districts (Plates A. 1 and A. 2) - can also be linked to the social system of these sub-tribes. Among them social organizations barely existed beyond the boundaries of the extended families. Thus, there was no need to lay villages out in clusters which would be a requirement if such villages were intended to accommodate together branches or lineages of these sub-tribes. This is evident in the planning of the Kunuz villages as clusters (Plate A. 4). Such a layout was compatible with the well segmented social system of this sub-tribe and which was organized according to hierarchy. (28)

The design, construction and decoration of the Nubian house types were made to suit the climate, natural setting and economy of Nubia. This was also made in response to important social, cultural, religious, psychological and spiritual needs. The satisfaction of all these requirements was accomplished in an integrated and well balanced manner.

Various aspects of the design and construction of the Nubian

house types contributed to enhancing the micro-climate inside the houses. The houses were built around a central courtyard, and their walls were very thick (about 40-50 cm. wide) and constructed of mud or stone. They were surrounded by high walls which reached up to five metres in height and were almost windowless with the exception of small high level slits (Plates A. 6. to A. 7). Due to these features, the houses resembled the temples and fortresses of Ancient Egypt.⁽²⁹⁾ The high thick external walls shaded the central courtyard of the house and made it cool enough for use during summer. These external walls also protected the court of the house and the surrounding rooms from the cold northerly winds during winter.⁽³⁰⁾

The Nubian house types, with their central courtyard and high external walls, helped protect the privacy of the household - considered to be an important requirement in line with the conservative aloof Nubian's standards.⁽³¹⁾ In particular with regards to the Fadija, this was seen as a very high priority. Within the population of this sub-tribe, disputes between kinspeople were resolved within the boundaries of their houses.⁽³²⁾ As a result of this, traditional institutions and government agencies which usually deal with these matters, such as customary law courts and police, rarely interfered. The insignificant role of official agencies in resolving disputes, is indicated by the fact that the police in the Fadija district had very little work to do and dealt mainly with minor cases of smuggling.⁽³³⁾

In addition to their substantial role in protecting the

household from harsh unfavourable weather conditions, and maintaining the privacy of the members of a household, the high external walls of the Nubian house also sheltered its inhabitant from evil eyes.⁽³⁴⁾ The deep beliefs of the Nubians and their preoccupation with this matter had also affected the orientation of the house, as well as its decoration. All the houses, whether they were built on the eastern or western banks of the Nile were oriented towards the river. Through this arrangement, the houses faced the angels of the Nile to whom the Nubians sought refuge and help during times of hardships and also ensured protection against the demons inhabiting the deserts.

The degree of concern and manners of dealing with good and bad spirits differed from one Nubian sub-tribe to the other. This was partly affected by the degree of adherence to Islam and the way each one of these sub-tribes had practiced this religion.

The Kunuz Nubians who inhabited the northern district of Nubia decorated the facade of their houses with special motifs, sharp objects and shiny surfaces in order to dispel the evil eye.⁽³⁵⁾ In their efforts to pacify and please spirits, and as part of their practice of popular Islam, they relied mainly on the blessing of holy men and saints. This was sought through visits to the numerous shrines which dotted the Kunuz villages.⁽³⁶⁾ Such visits were considered essential before embarking on any important project, and at many times, just routine activities. Although some of these shrines were burial places for holy men, others were built in a response to a dream by an ordinary individual. Some shrines were

built by children, yet they were recognized and visited by adults.⁽³⁷⁾

Due to the strong belief of the Kunuz in spirits, these shrines were significant public places in their villages. In addition to their central role in the religious and spiritual life of this sub-tribe, they were also very important social, cultural and recreational centres (Plates A.8 to A. 9).⁽³⁸⁾ The gathering of the Kunuz branches and lineages was perceived as a show of solidarity. The offering of food at the shrines, and the organization of feasts at these shrines (Plates A.10 to A. 11), had always helped feeding the needy. Thus, such gatherings ensured high levels of co-operation within the village community, as well as between kinspeople living in various villages who used to meet there.⁽³⁹⁾

The Kunuz houses consisted in the main of two rooms, one for living and sleeping and the other for cooking and storage.⁽⁴⁰⁾ The two were built along the northern boundary wall with a spacious courtyard in front of them (Figs. A. 3 to A. 4). Guest rooms were rarely provided.⁽⁴¹⁾ This, considered together with the fact that the Kunuz houses were not intended for the accommodation of extended families, are the main reasons for the small size of these houses in comparison to those of the Fadija and Mahas.

The Kunuz used to accommodate their guests in the Khema; a guest house used also for collective prayers and which served the whole village community.⁽⁴²⁾ This is an indicator of the strong

social ties between the inhabitants of the Kunuz villages. The guests who visited individual households were received and entertained on benches built in front of the house (Figs. A. 5, A. 6 and A. 7 and Plates A. 13 and A. 14). In the rare cases where the guests were received in a hall inside the house, this was done in such a way that did not allow them to see the women using the courtyard of the house. A partition wall between the guest hall and the courtyard prevented this (Figs. A. 5, A. 6 and A. 7). Also this hall was located at one side of the main rooms of the house (Figs. A. 6 and A. 7 and Plates A. 13 and A. 14).⁽⁴³⁾ The design measures referred to above achieved the intended purposes as most of the Kunuz houses had two entrances; one for men and the other for women. The physical distance maintained between guests and the women of the house ensured segregation between the opposite sexes.

The Fadija Nubians showed special concern about their protection from evil spirits as shown in the numerous ceremonies performed at various points during the life of the individual; the time of birth and seven days after, during the celebration of circumcision and excision of children.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Due to the fact that the popular form of Islam was not widely practiced by the Moslem Fadija, their ceremonial life was not very often associated with the shrines of holy men like the Kunuz. In the context of their ceremonial life, the Fadija differed from the Kunuz in another important way. Most of their ceremonies were organized within their spacious dwellings, and also inside the well designed bridal quarter, rather than in public places.⁽⁴⁵⁾ The celebration and social occasions were mostly

restricted to neighbouring households and closely related ones living in nearby villages.

The bridal quarter was an important part of the Fadija house. It was located at the south side of the house and consisted of three main components; a spacious courtyard connecting a verandah to a large room (Fig. A. 8). These quarters were entered from the central courtyard of the house. The main and subsidiary courtyards were connected by a door which opened towards the rear part of the house (Plates A. 15 to A. 16). The bridal quarter was usually built to accommodate the young men and women of the household during the initial period of their marital life.⁽⁴⁶⁾ In addition to this, they provided the setting for the various celebrations and social occasions organized by the household. The walls enclosing these quarters, were especially decorated for such celebrations (Plates A. 17). During these occasions the men and women, members of the household and their guests, mixed freely inside the bridal quarter (Plates A. 18 to A. 19). This practice was considered intolerable according to the standards of the Arab Nilotic tribes of northern Sudan such as the Mahas Nubians.⁽⁴⁷⁾

The house of the Fadija was designed to accommodate the extended family. Within that house, a grandfather or grandmother lived with his, or her, married sisters, sisters-in-law and their families. Whereas the newly married women stayed in the bridal quarter, others lived with their children in the verandah and the adjacent rooms built in the northern part of the house (Fig. A. 8). The women of the household co-operated together with the housework,

and they cooked in a large kitchen located at the rear part of the house (Plate A. 20 and Fig. A. 8). They always kept the house and its central courtyard clean, tidy and well decorated⁽⁴⁸⁾ (Plates A. 21 to A. 22).

The Fadija men who stayed behind in Nubia mainly used and entertained their guests in three separate locations. A long mud bench built along the front wall of the house which provided a suitable place where the men of the house entertained their guests and met their neighbours. (Fig. A. 9 and Plates A. 23 to A. 24). This was considered one of the very few public places of the Fadija villages. The male guests were sometimes received and entertained in the entrance hall where they sat on the mud benches lining its walls (Fig. A. 9). The reception and accommodation of the male guests, especially if they were staying overnight, took place generally in the spacious, cool and well decorated reception room (Plates A. 25 to A. 26), located at the side of the entrance hall (Fig. A. .).⁽⁴⁹⁾

Most of the Fadija houses had only one entrance. As a result of this, the men of the household and their guests who sat in the benches in front of the house, in the entrance hall or in the reception room were able to monitor the women entering and leaving the house. When guests entered the house through the entrance hall they were also able to see the women in the central courtyard⁽⁵⁰⁾ (Fig. A. 10), this was not considered as a matter of concern, as these same guests were permitted to mix freely with the women of the house in the bridal quarter during the social occasions organized by the household. On the contrary, the men and their guests as they

stayed nearby the only entrance of the house ensured protection for the household women living in the inner parts of the house.⁽⁵¹⁾

In a similar way to the custom of the Fadija, the Mahas houses accommodated more than one elementary family within the same house. However, the design of the house was made in a way that ensured segregation between the sexes and also maintained high levels of privacy for women. This is manifest in the division of the house, into men's and women's quarters (Fig. A. 10). It is also clearly evident in the positioning of the door connecting the two quarters, and this in relation to the wall separating the men's and women's courtyards as explained below.

The Mahas women were restricted to their domain which was located at the rear part of the house. Their privacy was always assured as they used the rooms of the house, the kitchen or the courtyard which connected them. The men and their guests who sat in the courtyard, terrace or reception located in the men's domain, were not able to see the women. In addition to its contribution to maintaining their privacy of women, the design of the house facilitated their protection by the men and guests of the household. The positioning of the door connecting the two courtyards at right angles to the wall dividing these courtyards allowed the men and guests sitting in their quarter to monitor the side entrance of the house leading to the women's quarter⁽⁵²⁾ (Fig. A. 10).

The interaction between the Kunuz men and women in private places in Nubia was very limited even between close relatives. This

was partly maintained through accommodating each elementary family in a separate house. As a result of this, extended family households were very rare. The young people who got married did not stay with their parents. If the housing plot of the parents was large enough, it was bisected by a dividing wall in order to allow the newly married couple to build their separate house. If the plot was too small the couple moved and built their house in a plot far away.⁽⁵³⁾ Due to this practice the Kunuz houses were small in comparison to those of the Fadija and Mahas which accommodated extended families. In addition to this, the Kunuz houses were small because most of the social occasions concerning the household were usually organized at the shrines located in public spaces and plots.

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FIGURES:

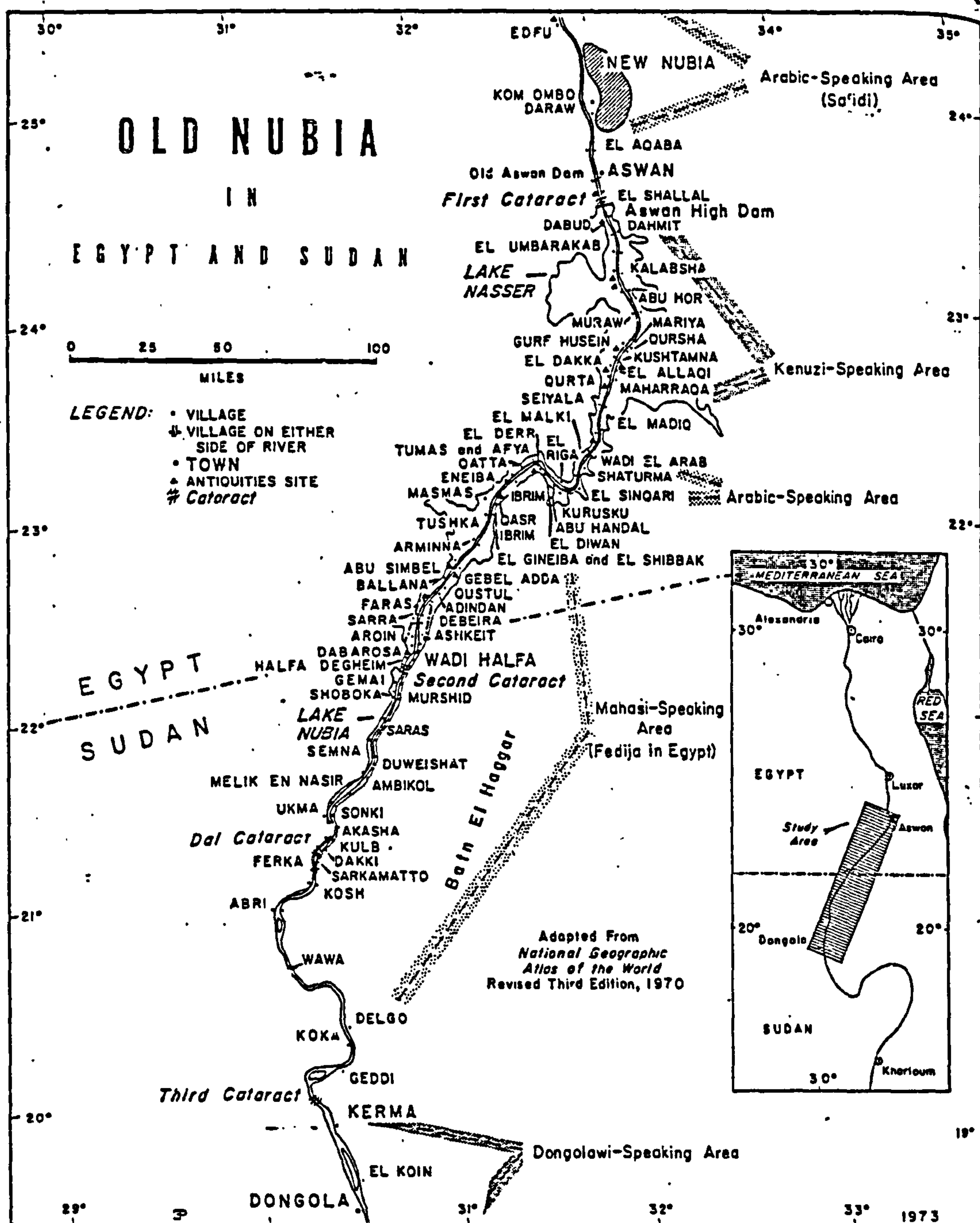


Fig. A.1. A map showing the area of Nubia which was flooded and the location of the High Dam of Aswan.

(Source: FERNIA, R., "Nubians in Egypt: Peaceful People", University of Texas, Austin and London, 1973.)

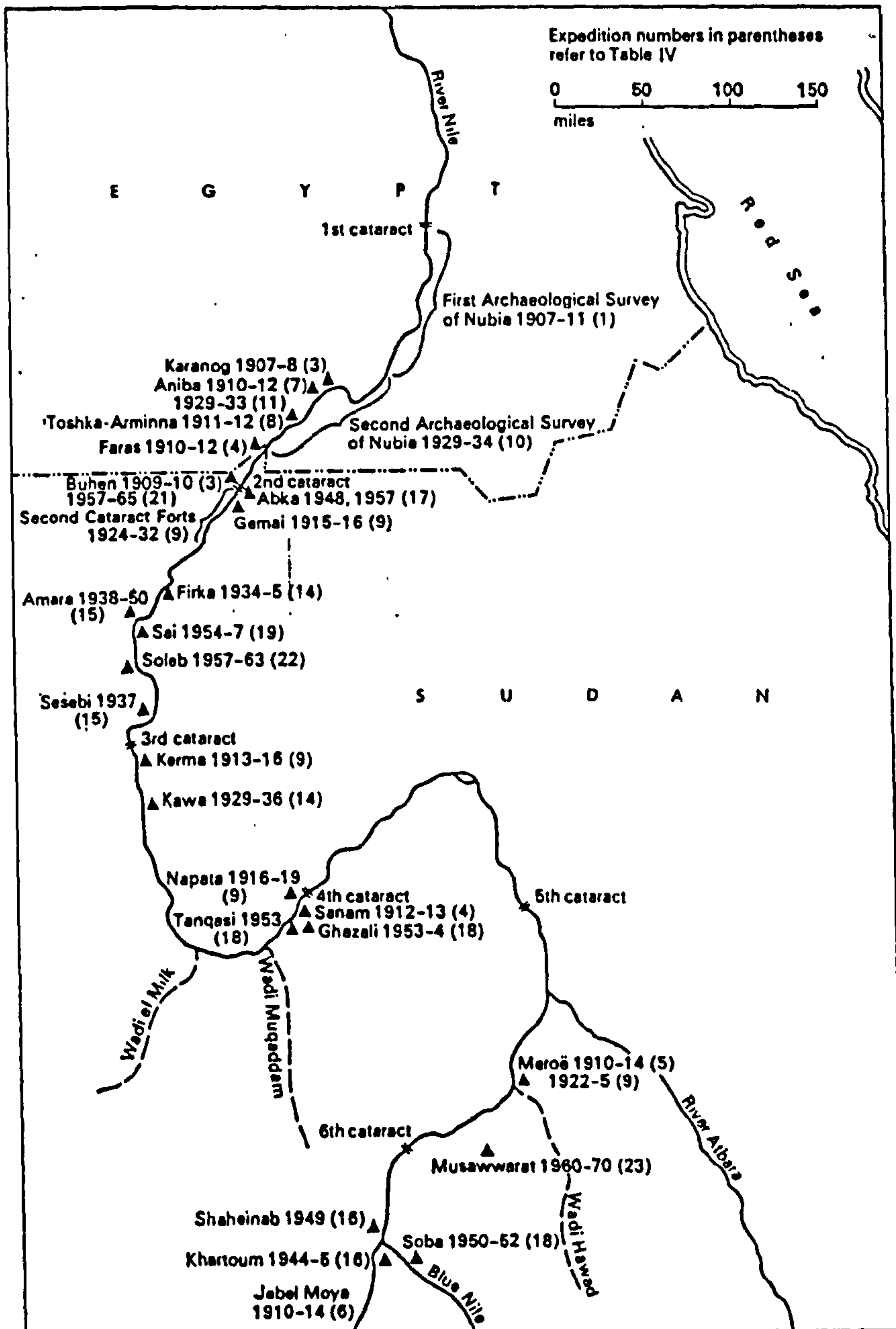
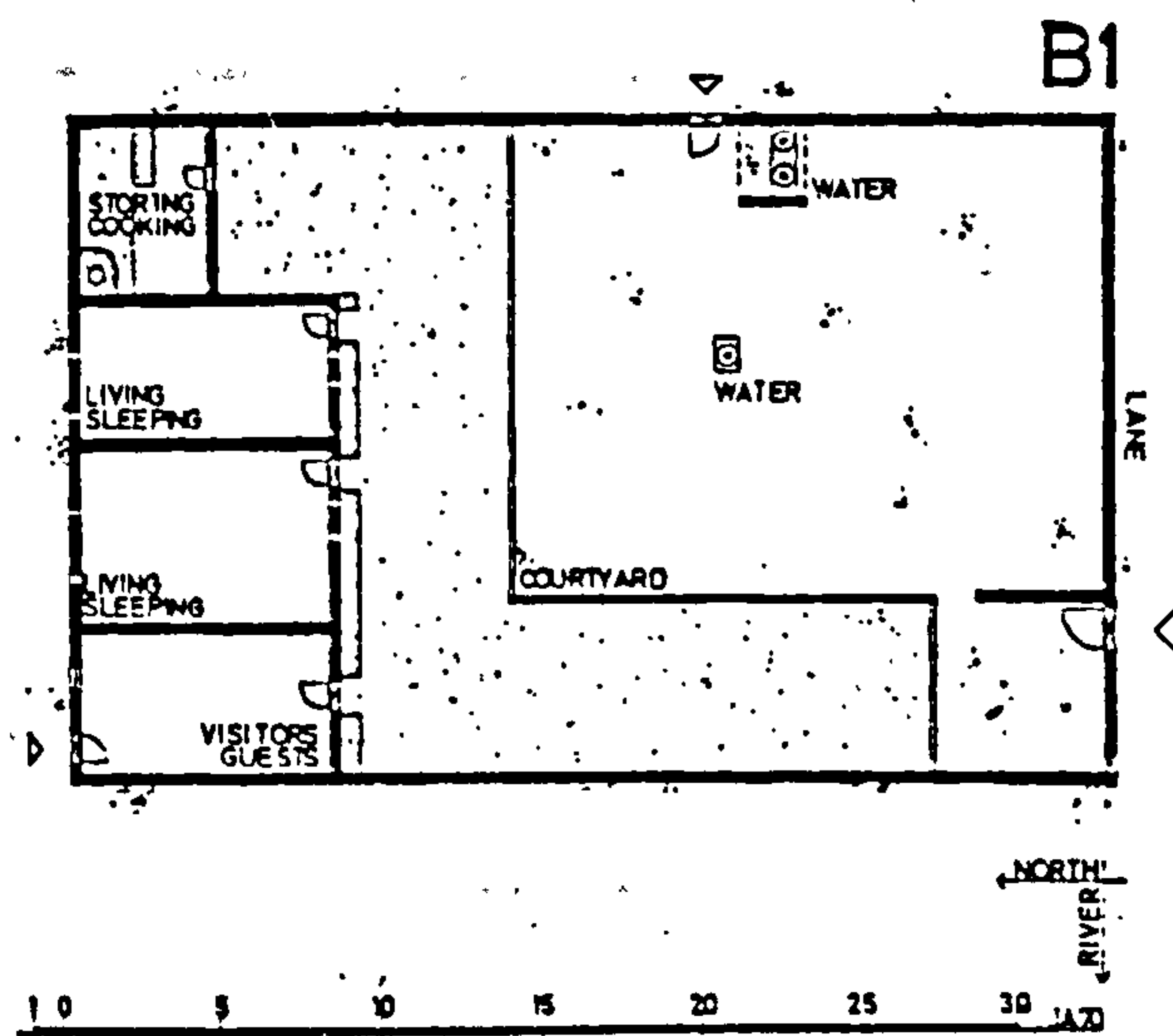


Fig. A.2. A map of Nubia based on the archaeological investigations in the area shows the locations of the settlements which existed during previous historical eras.

(Source: TRIGGER, "History of Settlements in Nubia", Yale University Publications in Anthropology, No.69, 1955.)



Figs. A.3. to A.7. (On this page and the next two pages) Some examples of the Kunuz houses.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

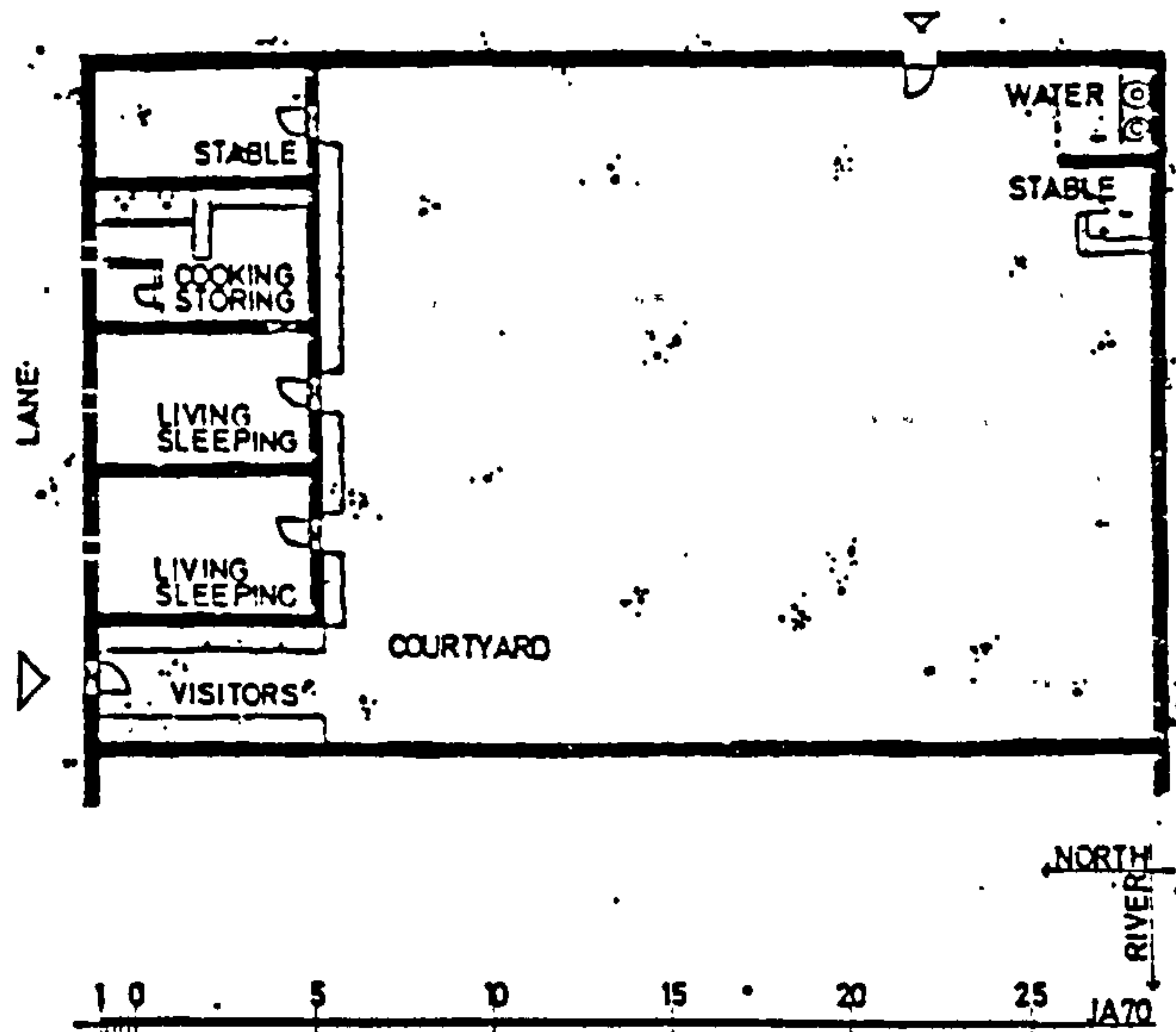


Fig. A.4.

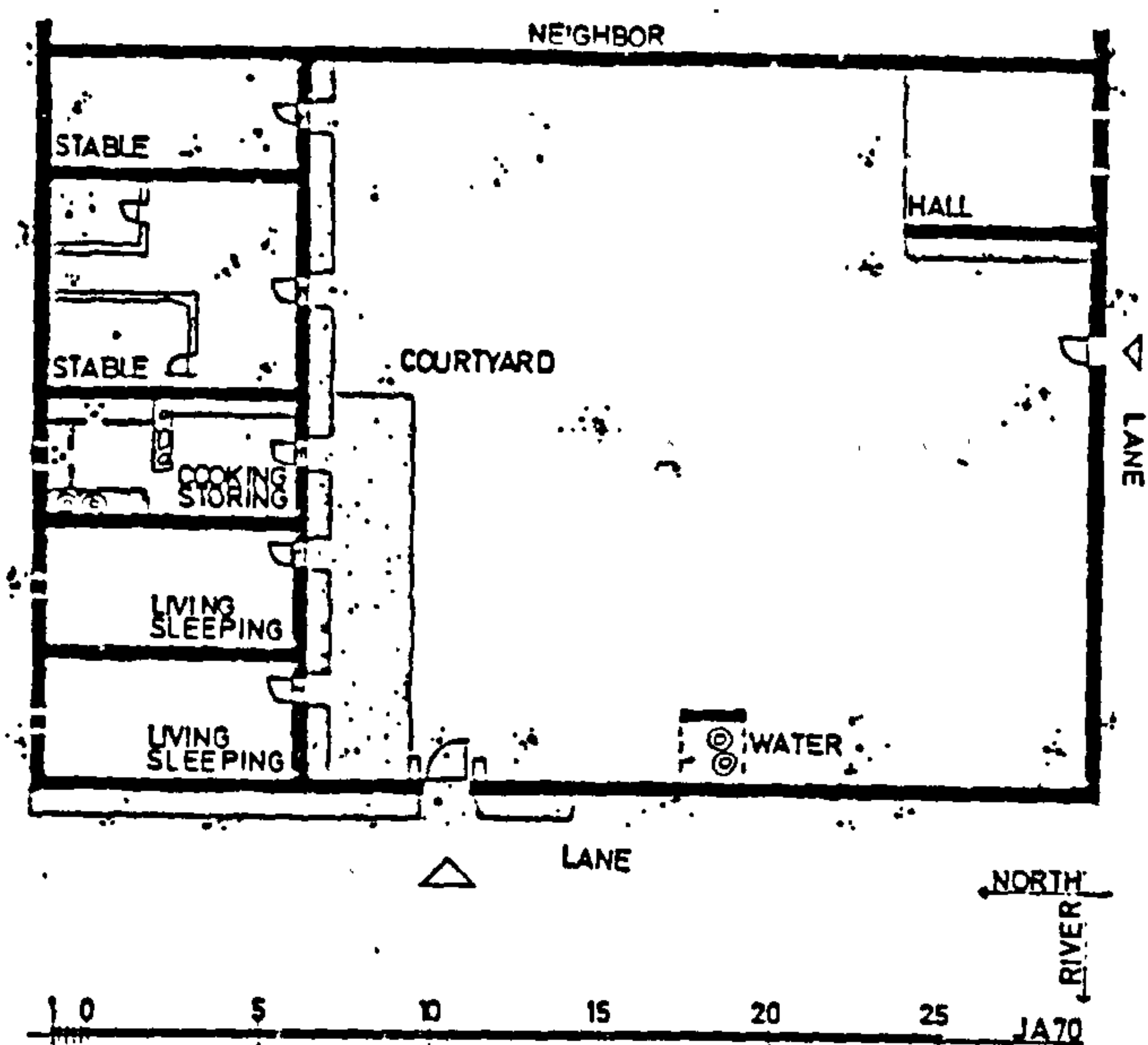


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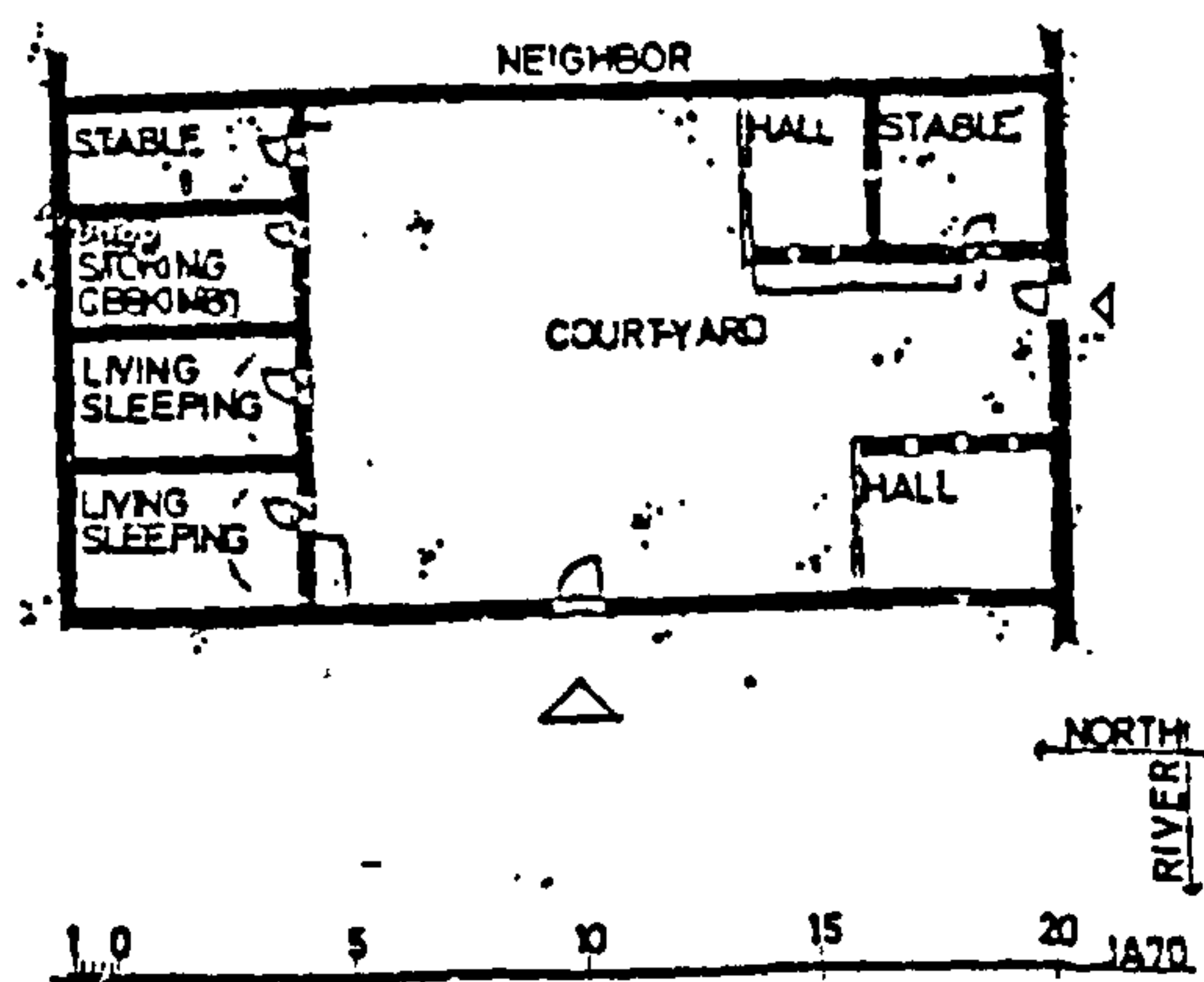


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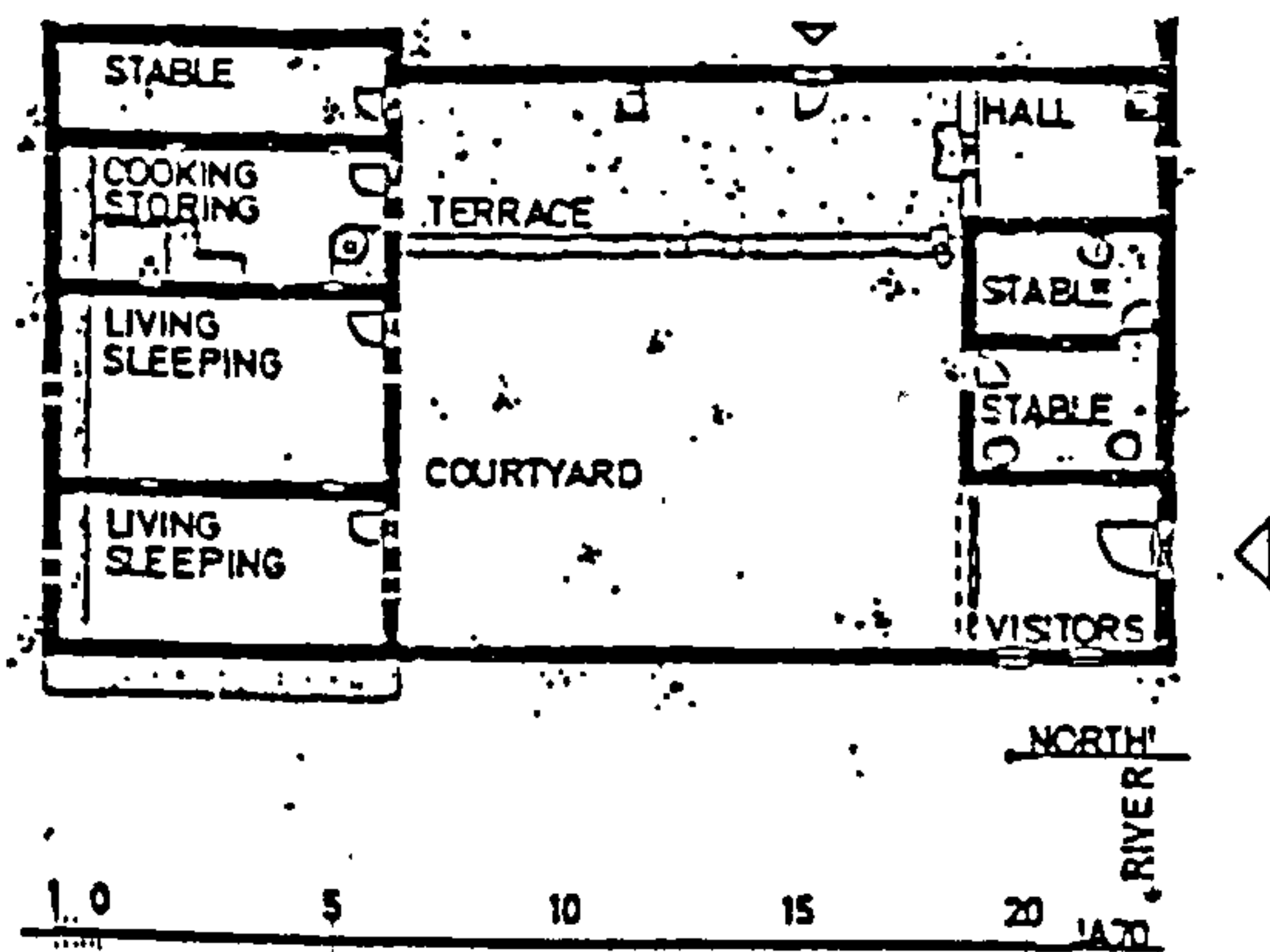
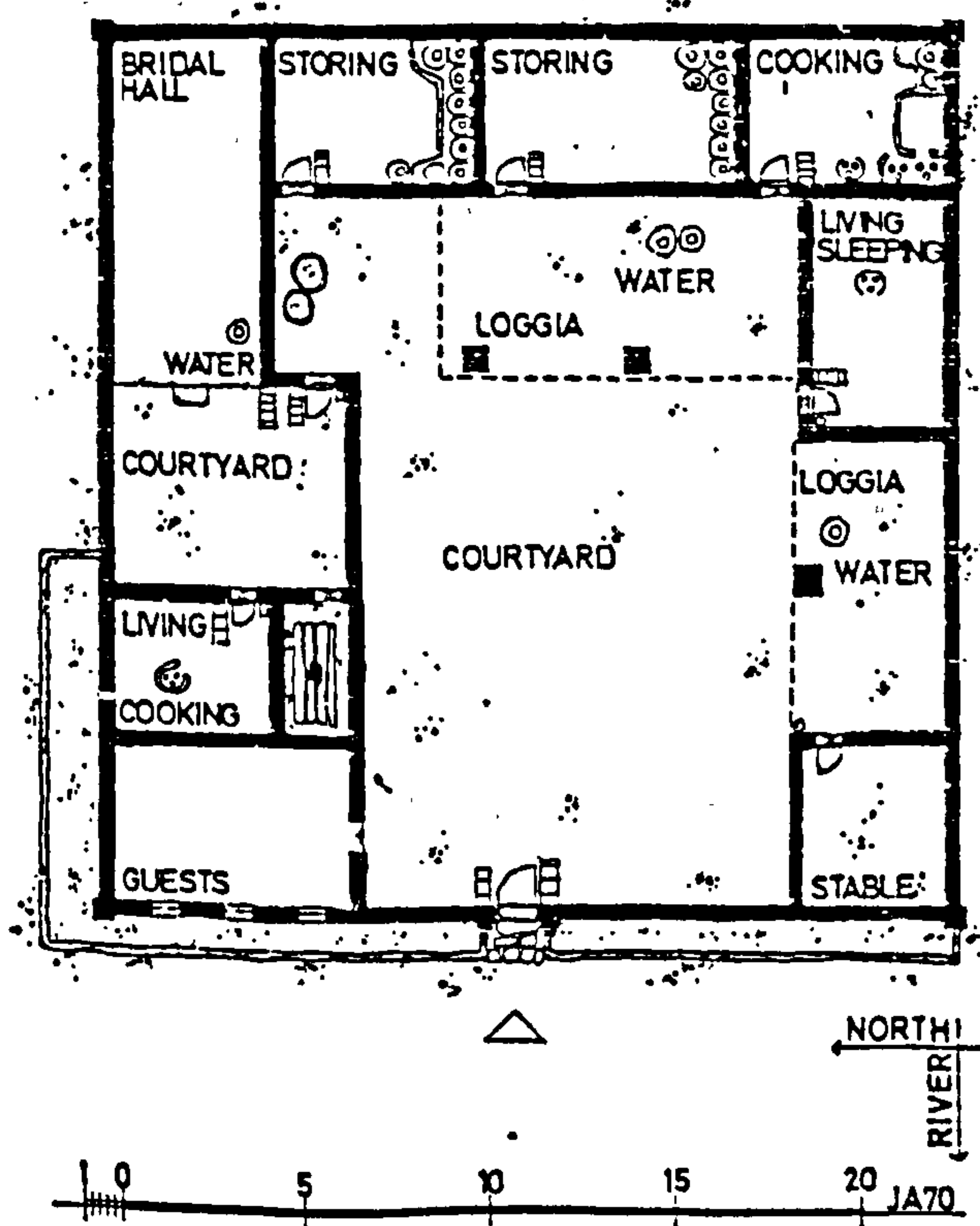


Fig. A.7.



Figs. A.8. and A.9. (On the next page) Two examples of the house types which were inhabited by the Fadija Nubians.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

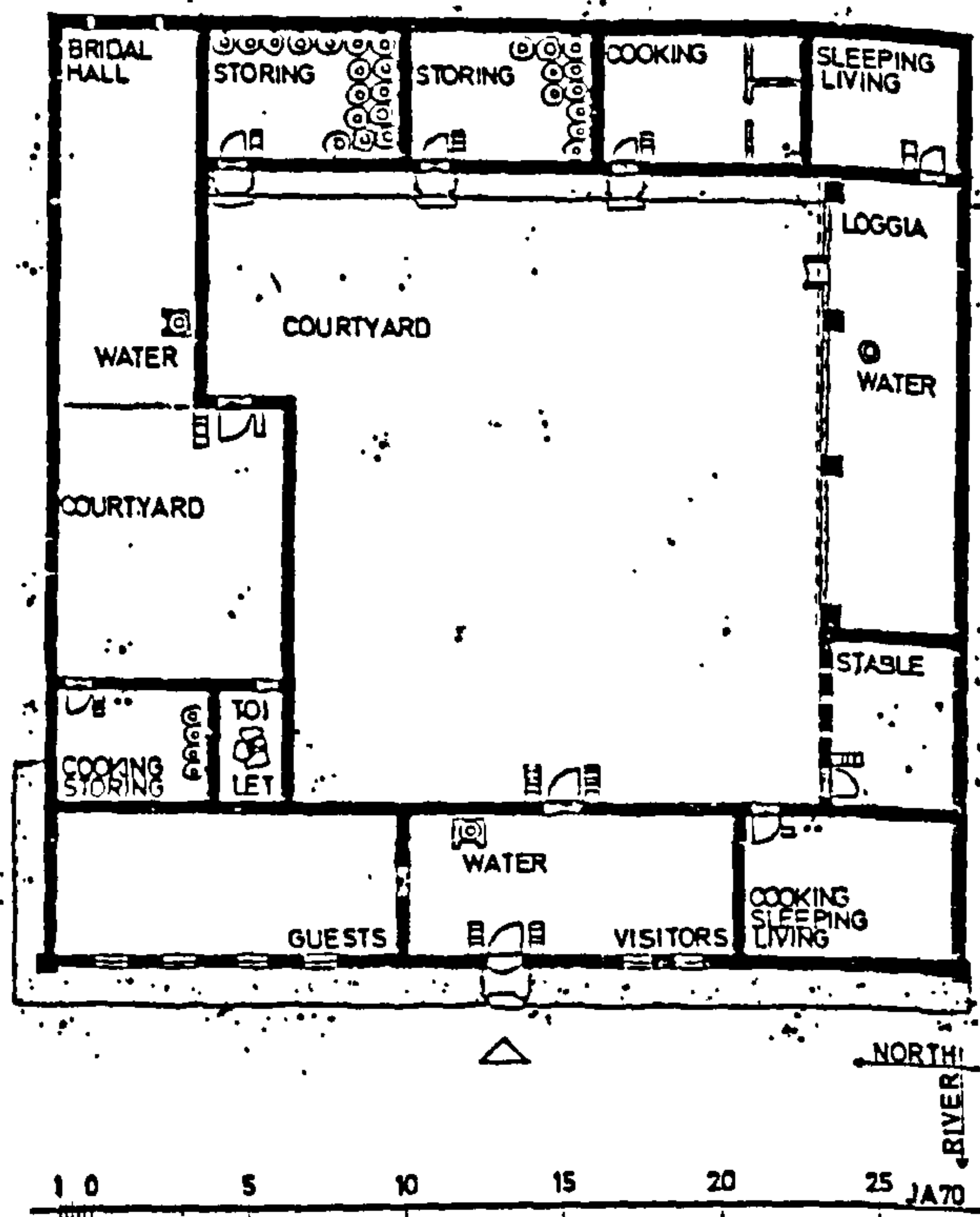


Fig. A.8.

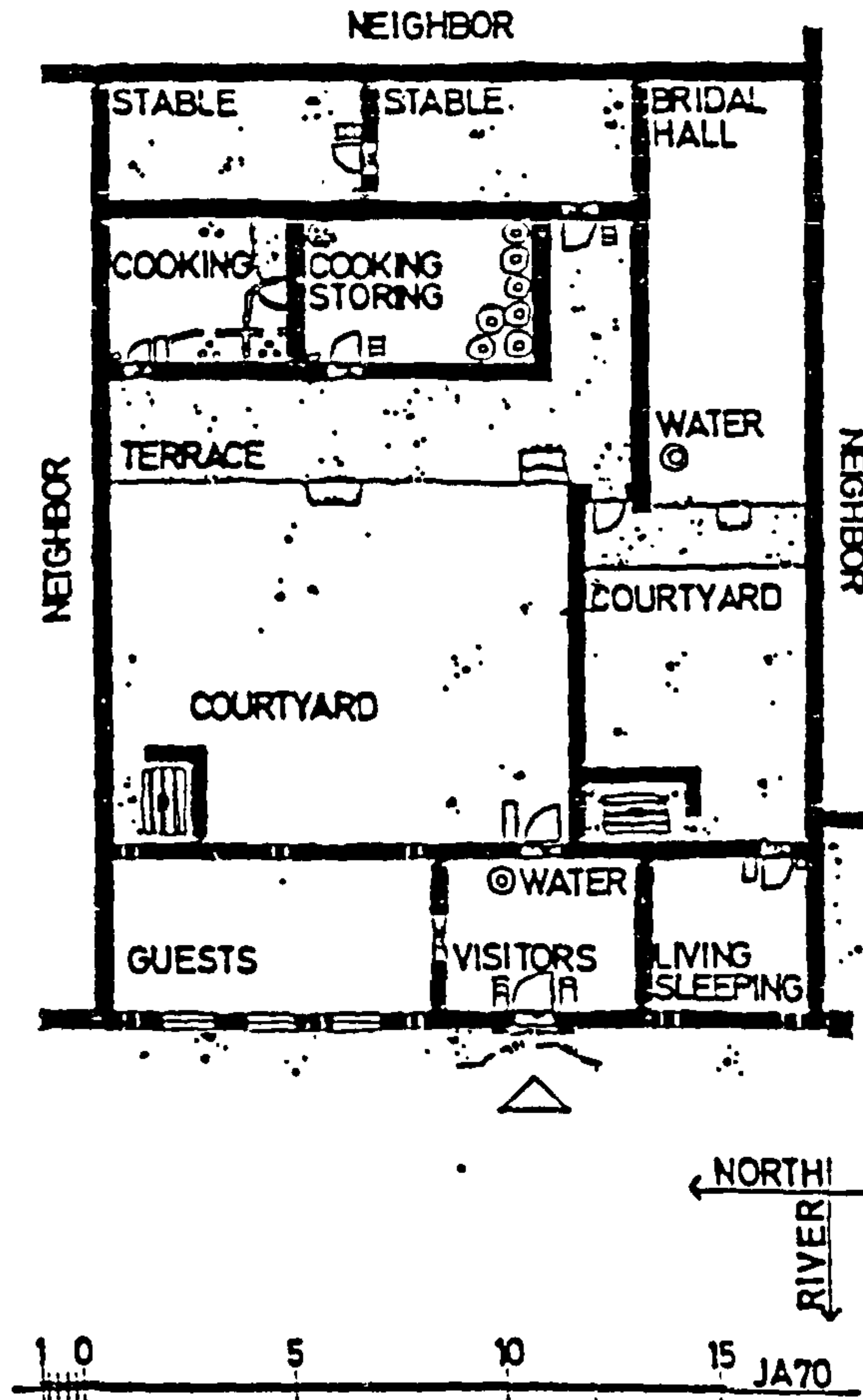
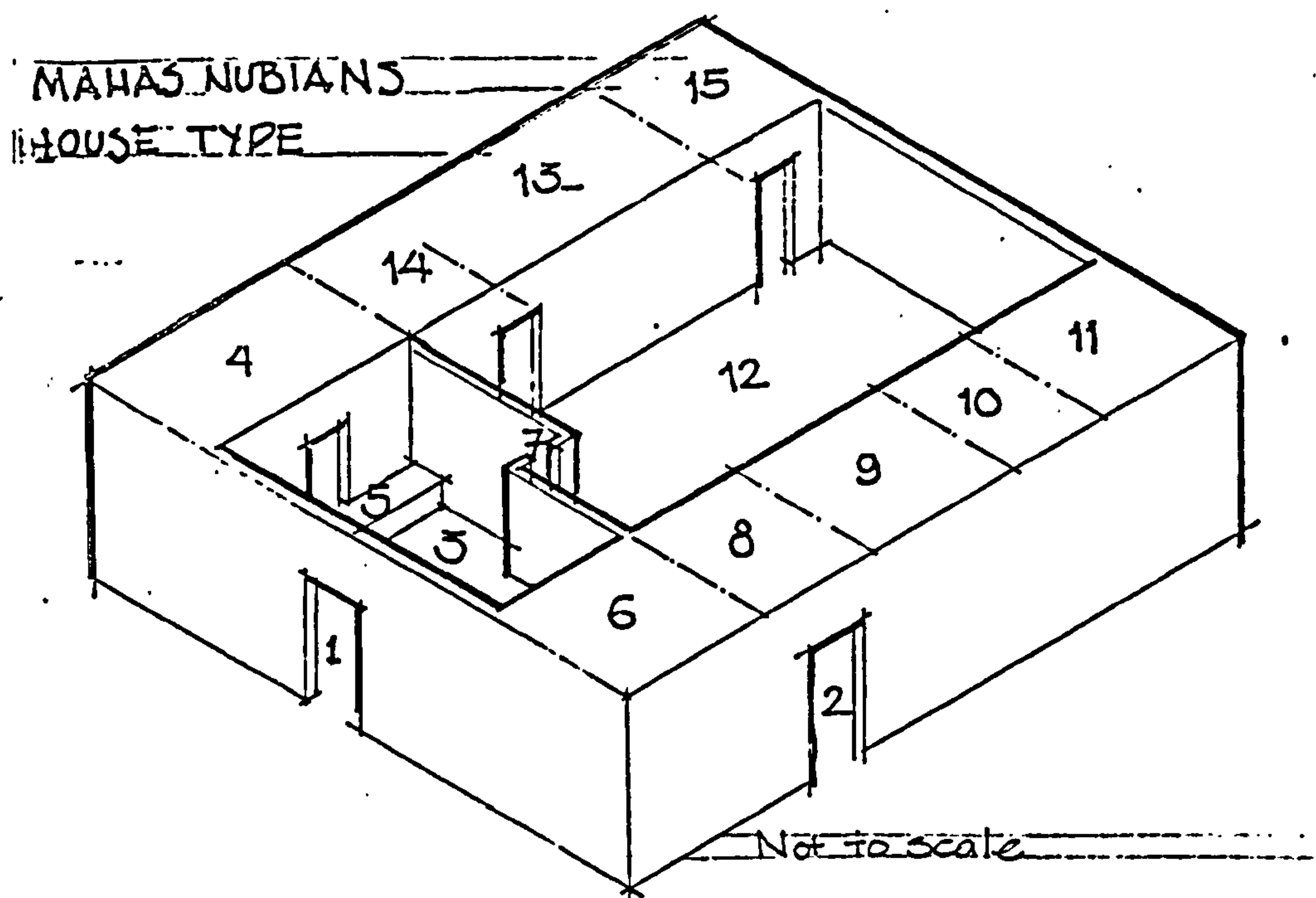


Fig. A.9.

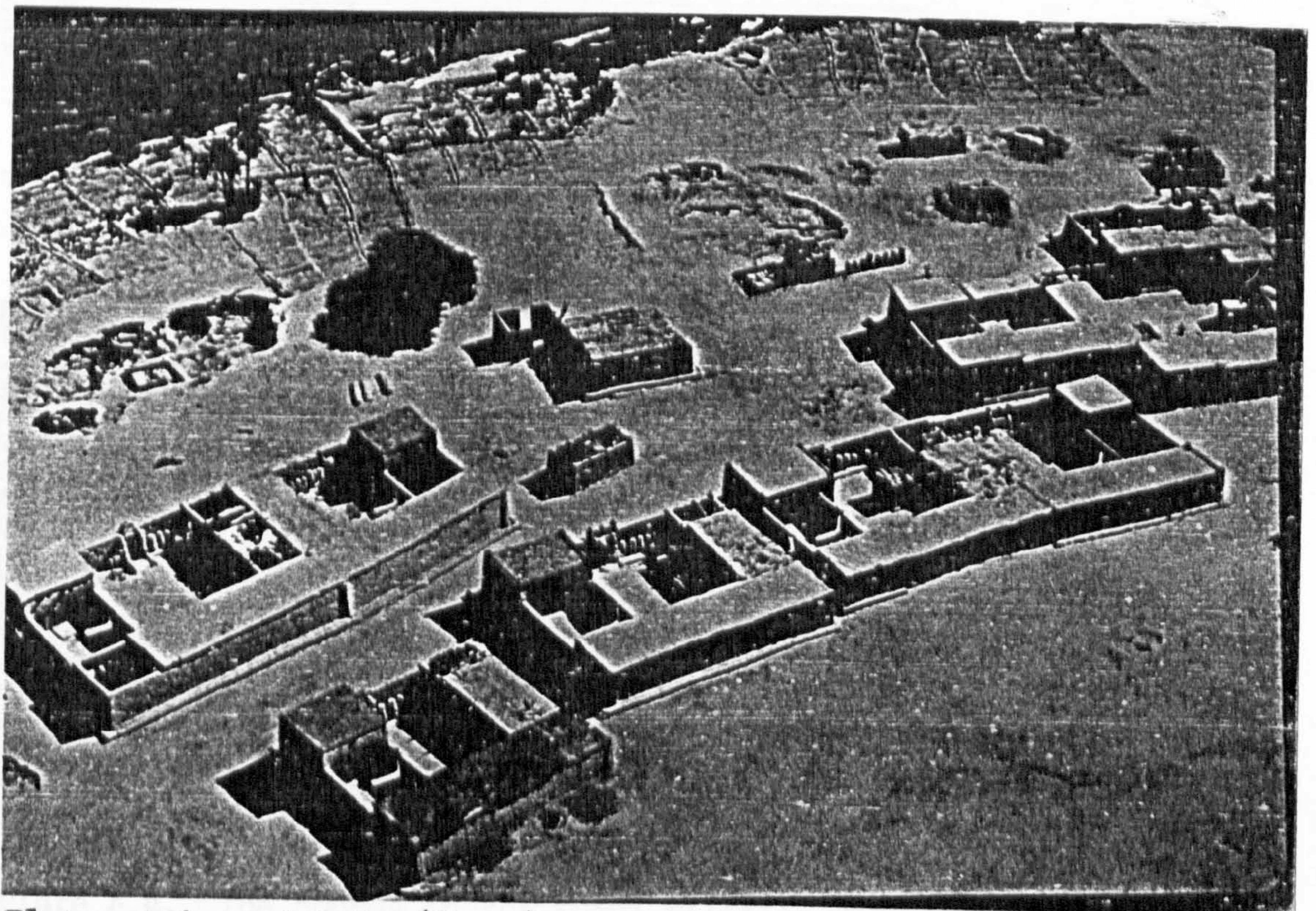
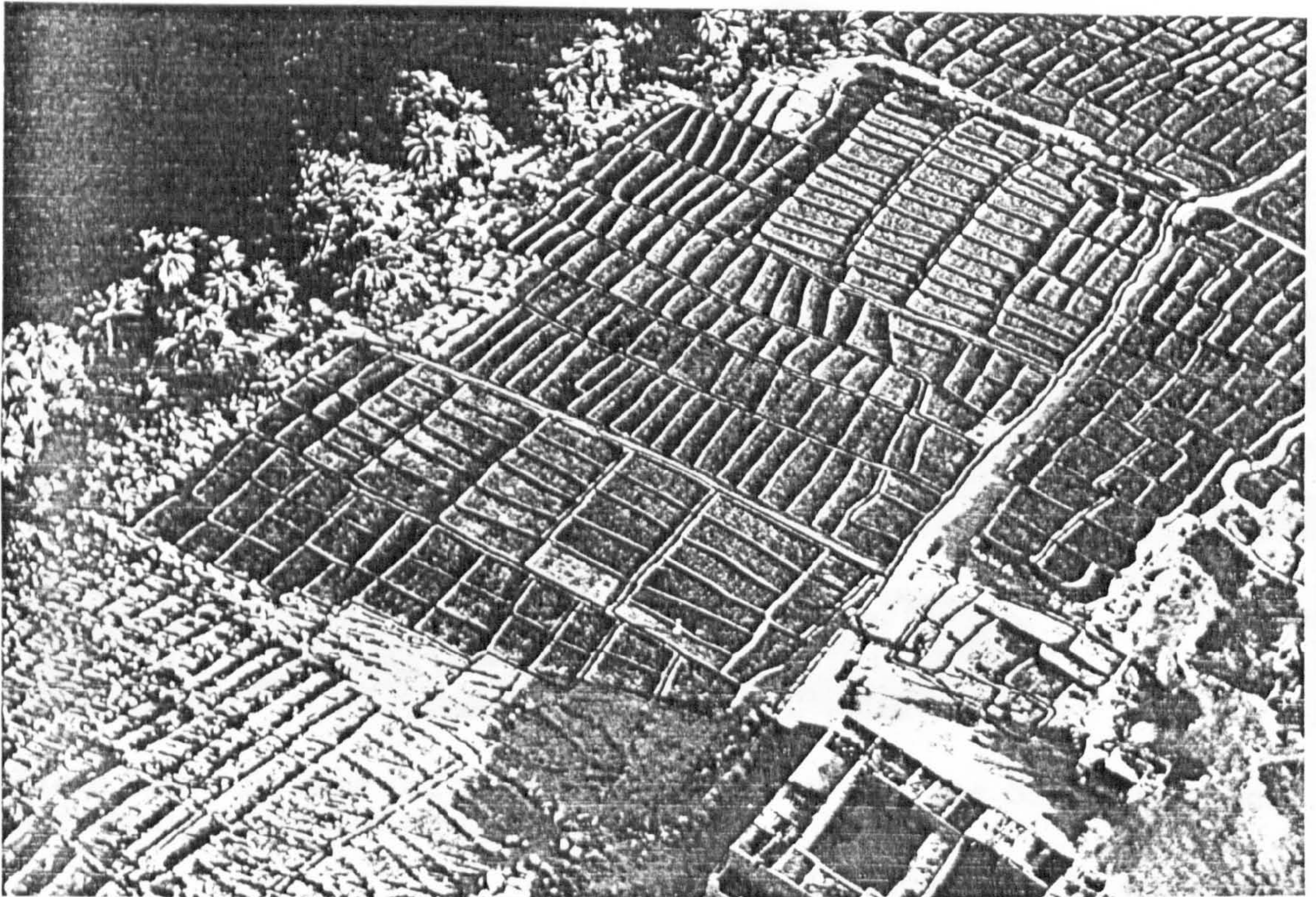


- 1 Entrance gate (men and guests)
- 2 Entrance gate (women)
- 3 Men subsidiary court
- 4 Guest room
- 5 Seating bench
- 6 Multi-purpose room
- 7 Connecting door (between central courtyard and subsidiary one)
- 8 Women entrance hall
- 9 Room
- 10 Hall
- 11 Room
- 12 Central courtyard
- 13 Kitchen
- 14 Granary store
- 15 Store

Fig. A.10 The Mahas house type. (Not scale).

(Source: the Author)

PLATES:



Plates A.1. and A.2. (Above) The villages in the Fadija and Mahas districts were strung along the river banks in a linear pattern.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plate A.3. In some parts of Nubia the river and its banks were rocky and hardly navigable or tractable.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plate A.4. The houses in the Kunuz villages were grouped together in clusters.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

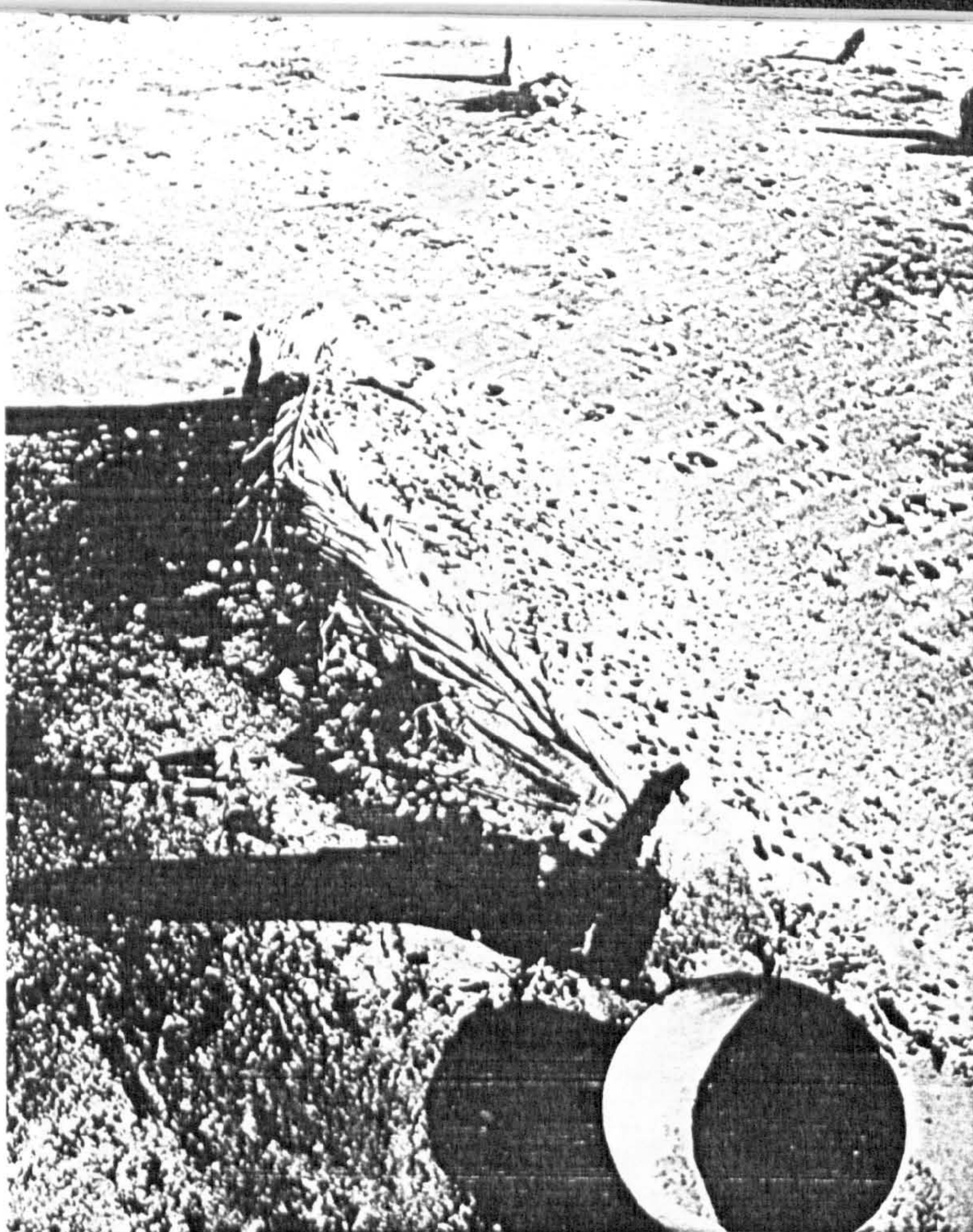
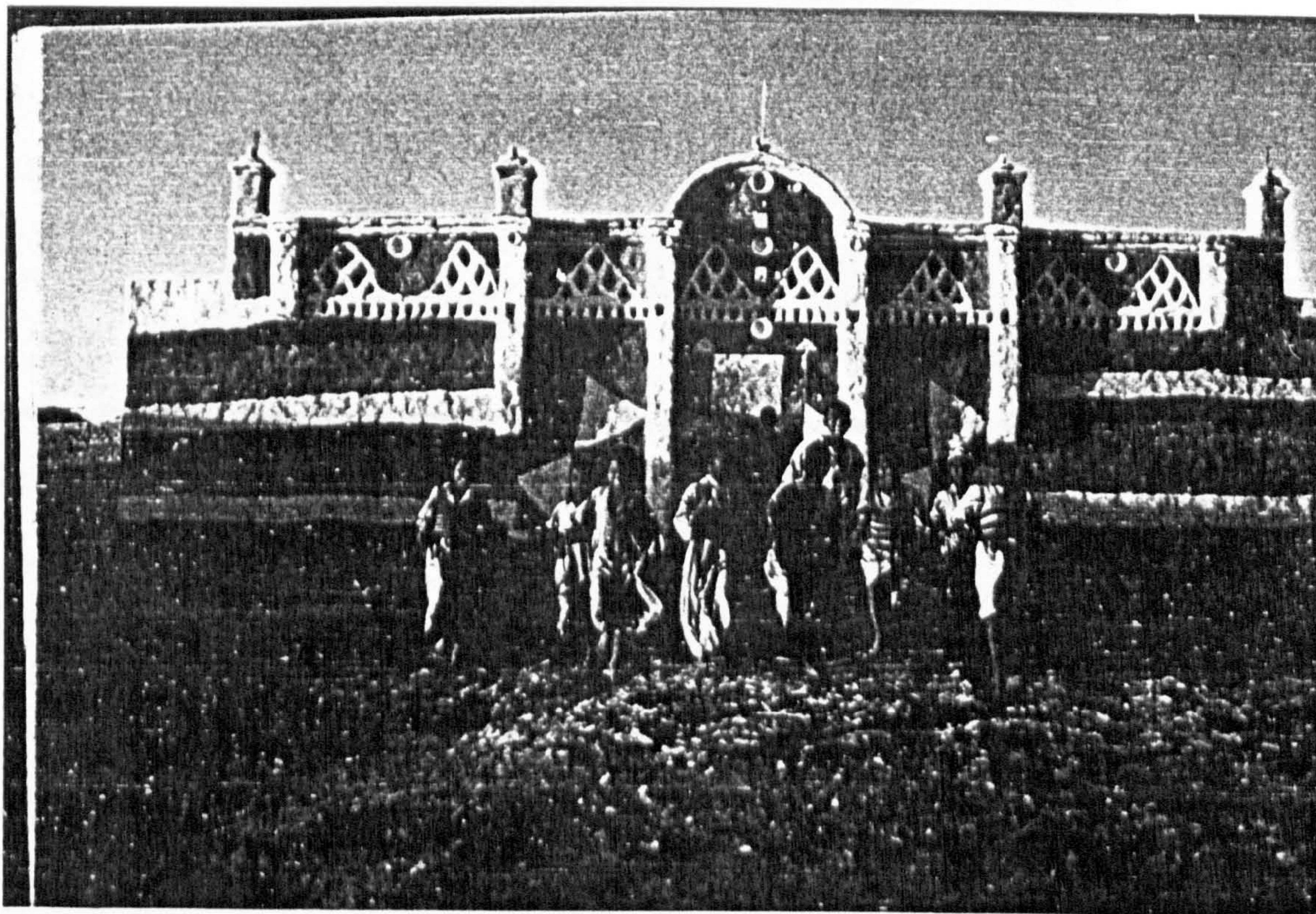


Plate A.5. In Nubia the tribespeople used to place palm fronds and bowls filled with the Nile water at the head of the graves.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plates A.6. and A.7. (Above and on the next page) Most of the houses in Nubia were windowless with the exception of small slits located at a high level.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

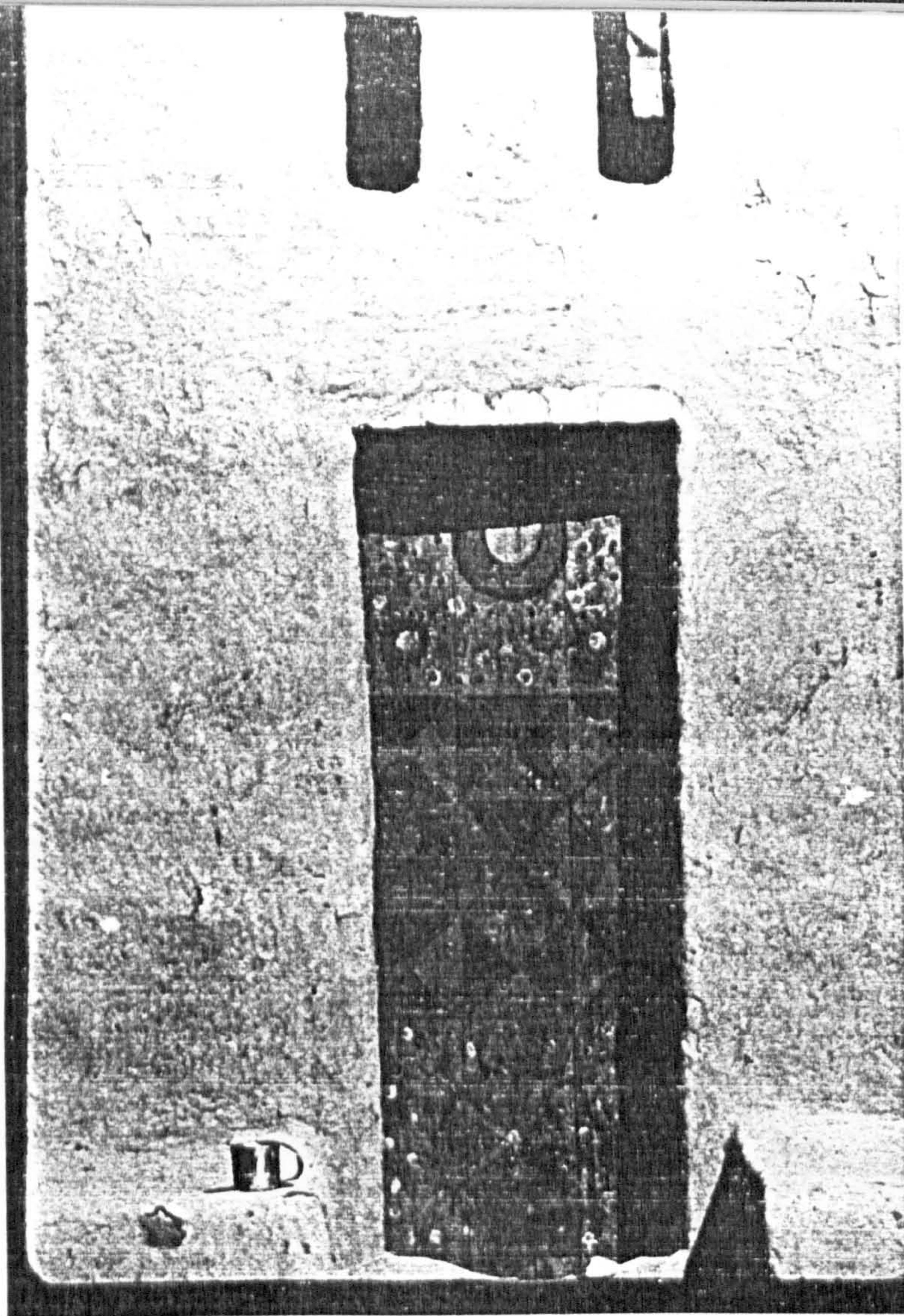
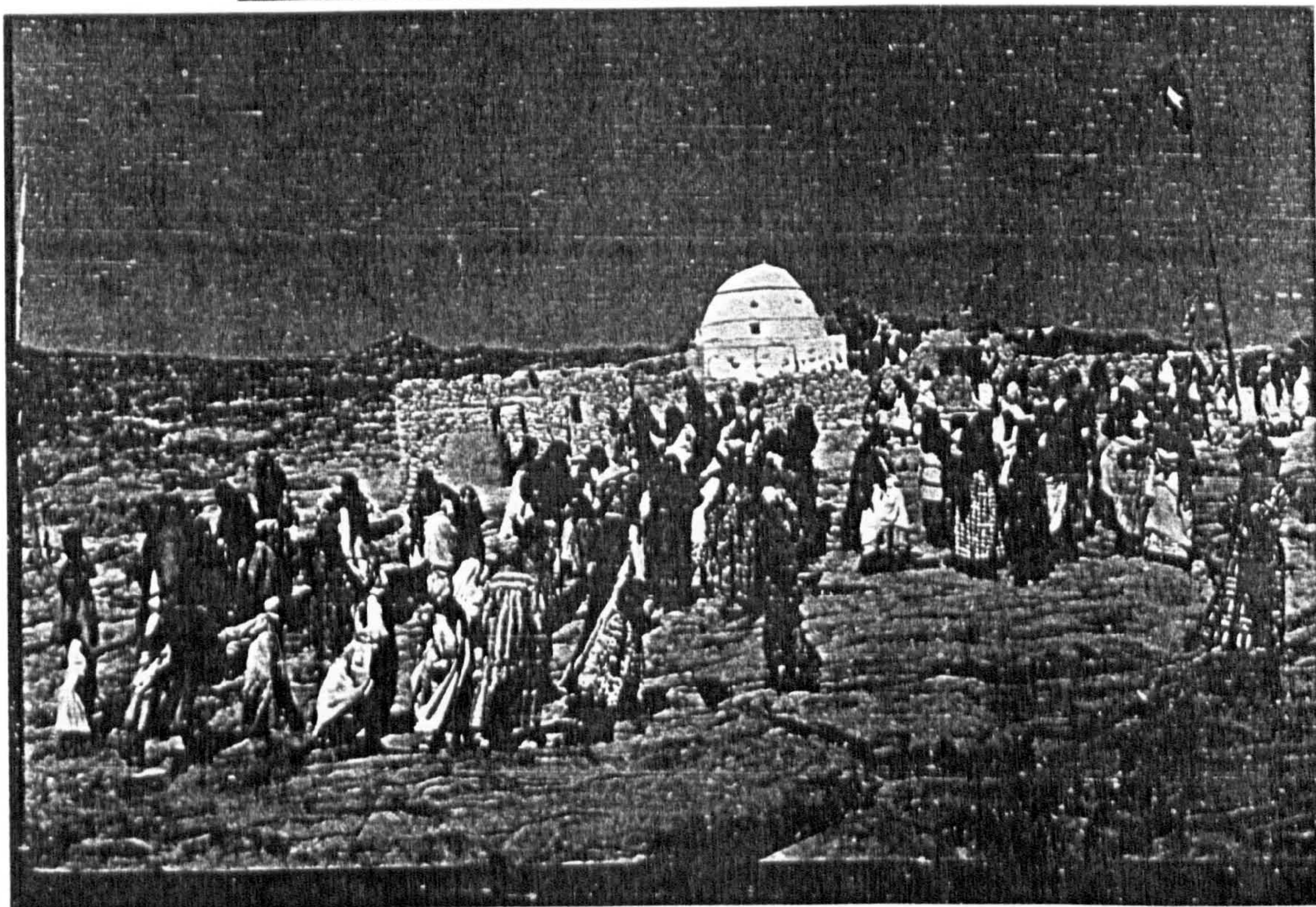


Plate A.7.



Plates A.8. and A.9. (Above and on the next page) The social, cultural and recreational life of the Kunuz revolved around their Saints' shrines.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plate A.9.



Plates A.10. and A.11. (Above and on the next page) The food offered by the Kunuz at the shrines of their Saints had helped to feed the needy.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plate A.11.

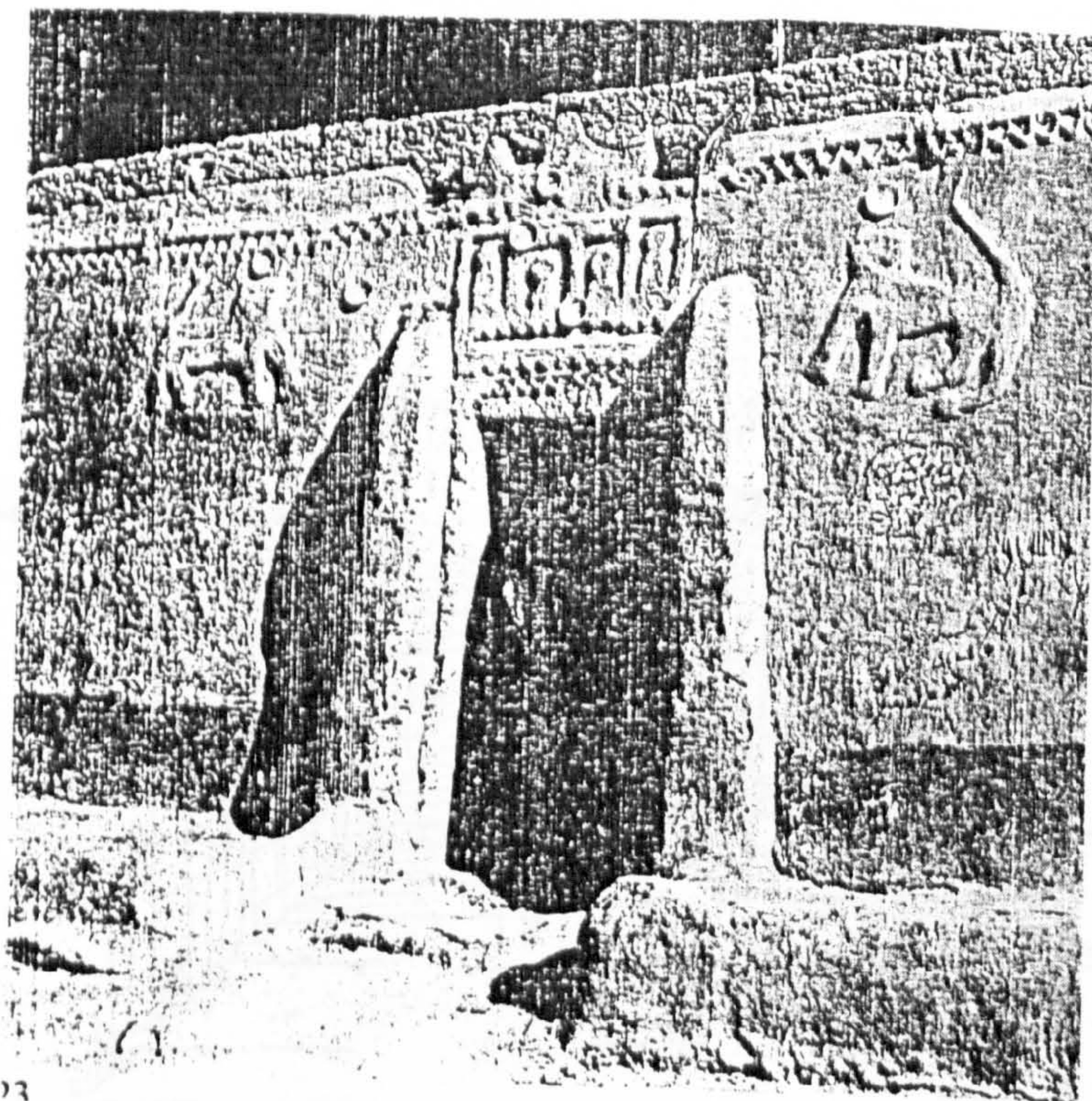


Plate A.12. In many of the Kunuz houses guests were seated and entertained on a mud bench built at the road side and near the entrance gate.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plate A.13. In some of the Kunuz houses guests were entertained in the entrance hall which is located in such a way that does not expose the women using the central courtyard of the house.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

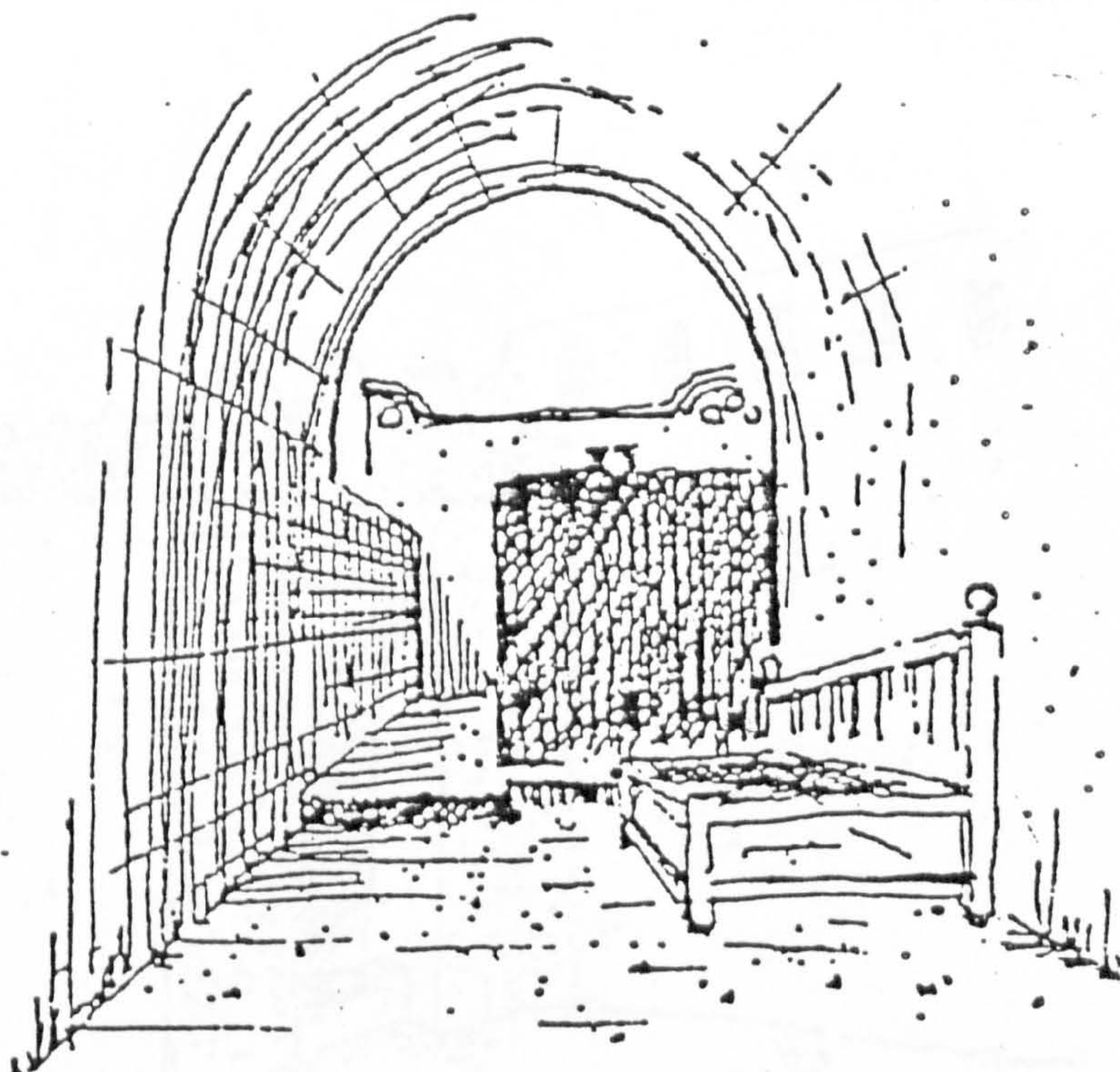


Plate A.14. To ensure the privacy of their women, the Kunuz used to build a partition wall between the hall used for entertaining the guests and the central courtyard of the house.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plates A.15. and A.16. (Above and below) The door leading to the bridal quarter of the Fadija house was opened towards the rear part of the house.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

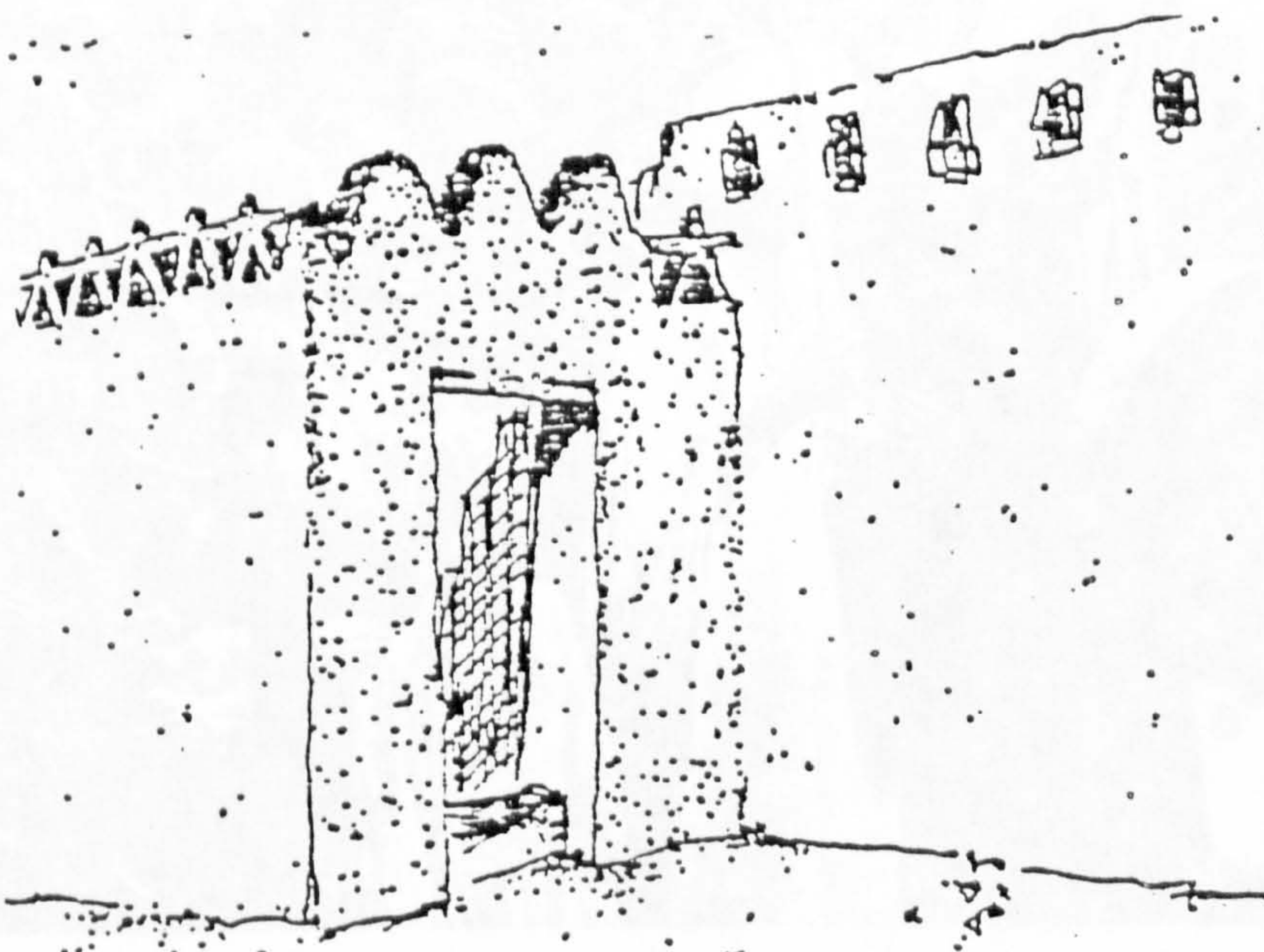


Plate A.16.

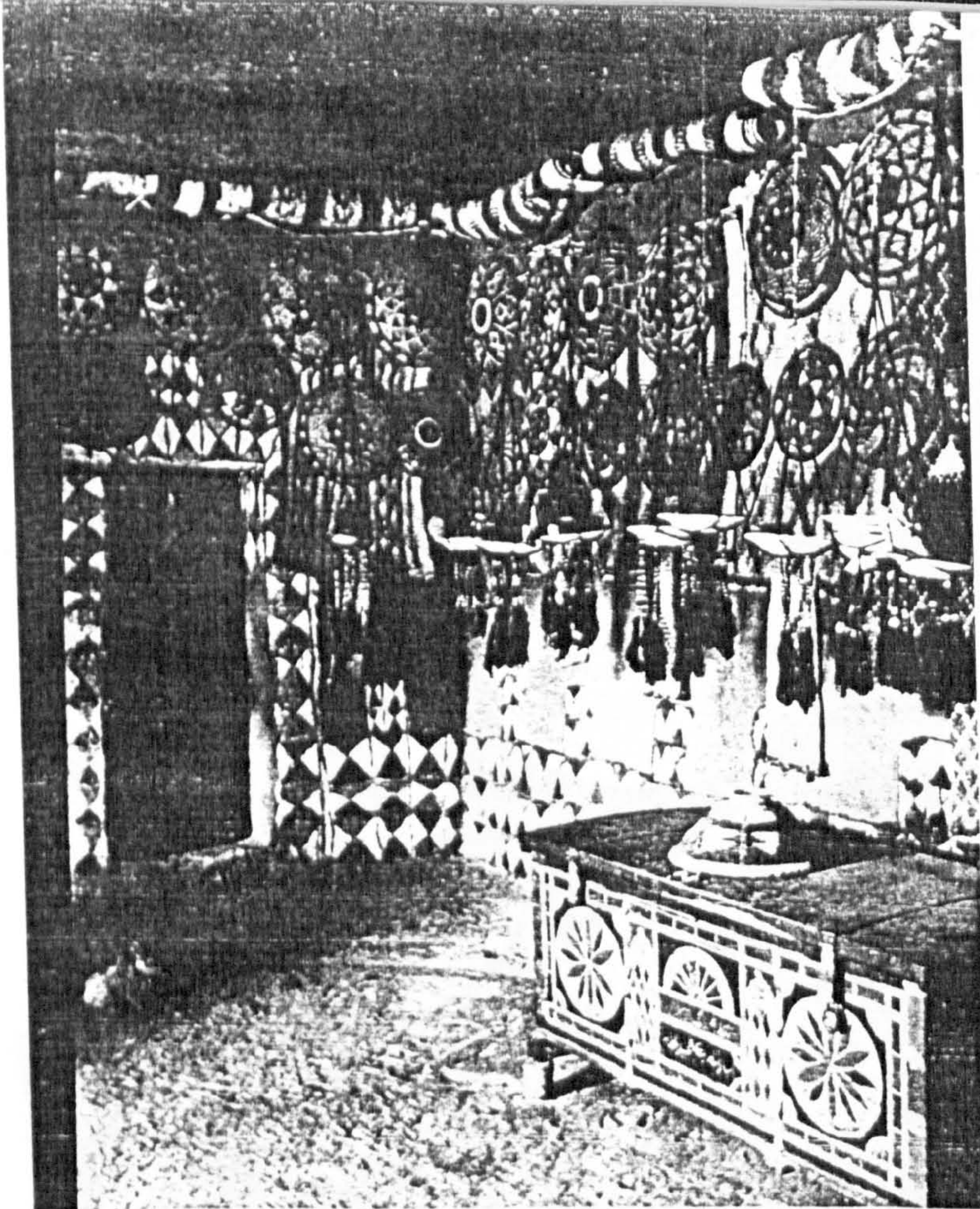


Plate A.17. The Fadija used to decorate the walls of the subsidiary courtyard of the bridal quarter in an elaborate way.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plates A.18. and A.19. (Above and on the next page) During the social occasions and celebrations organized by the Fadija family both sexes mix freely inside the bridal quarter.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plate A.19.



Plate A.20. The women of the Fadija extended family cook together in the Kitchen located at the rear part of the house.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

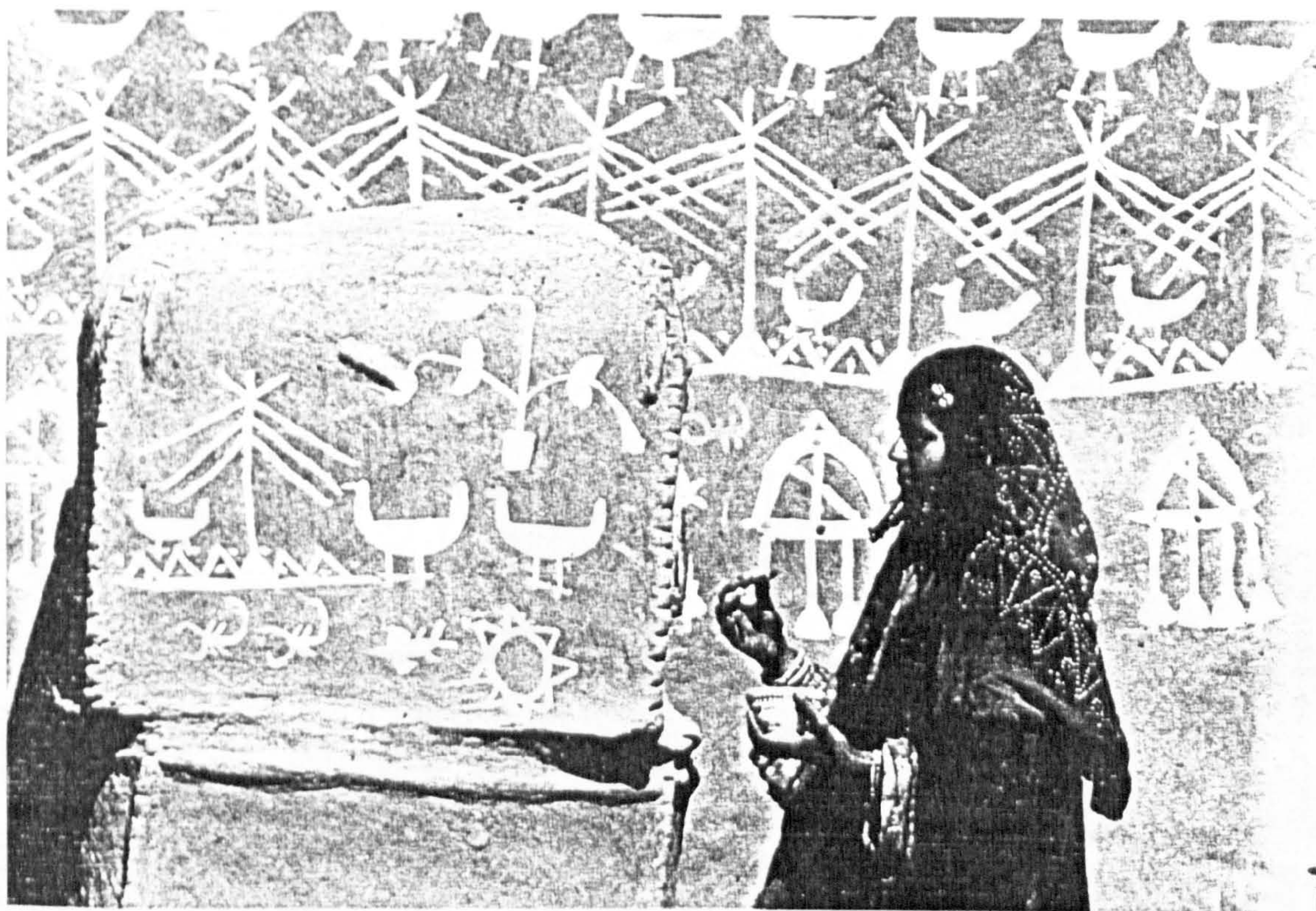


Plate A.21. As part of their responsibilities, the Fadija women painted and decorated the internal walls of the central courtyard of their houses.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

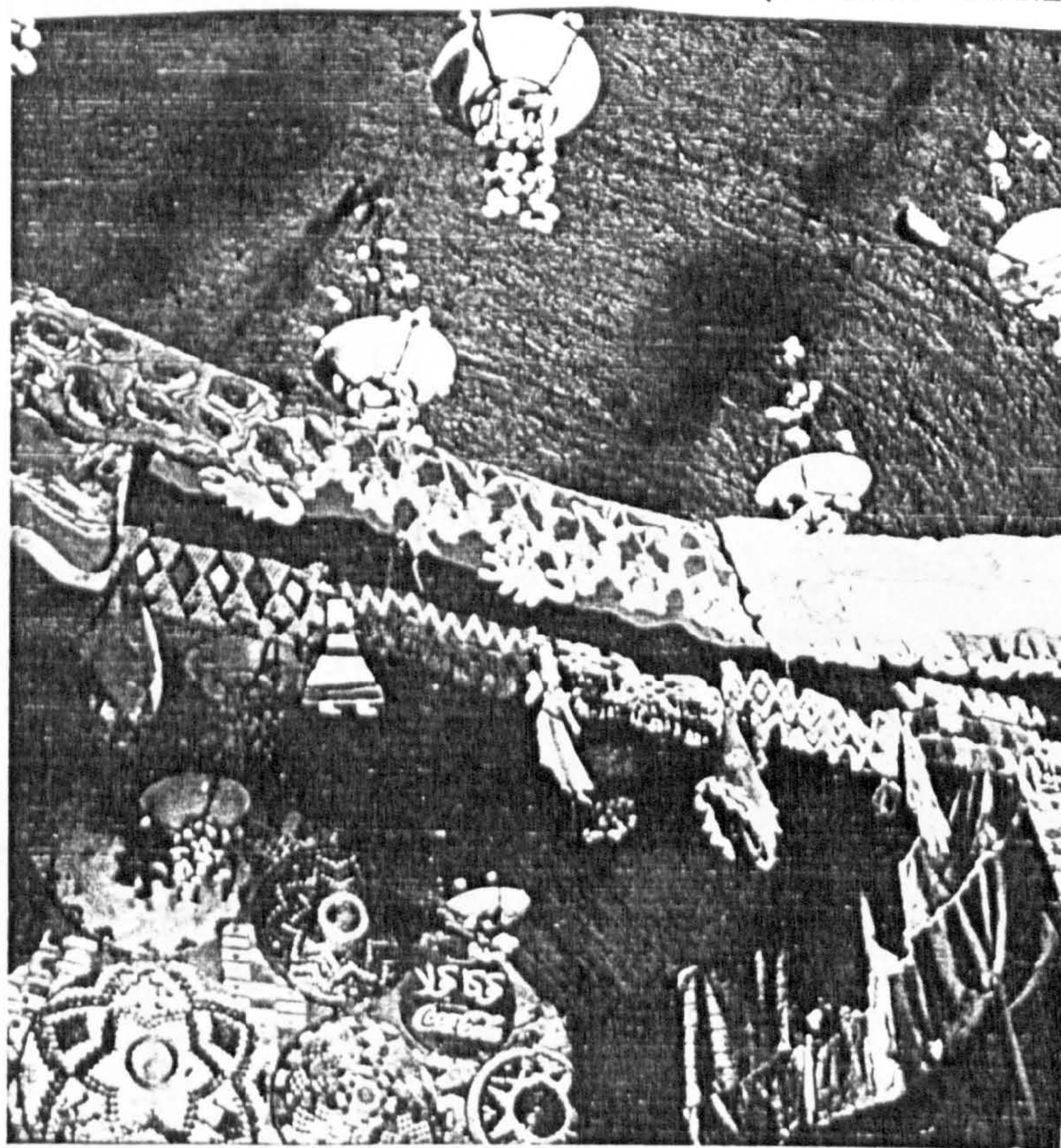
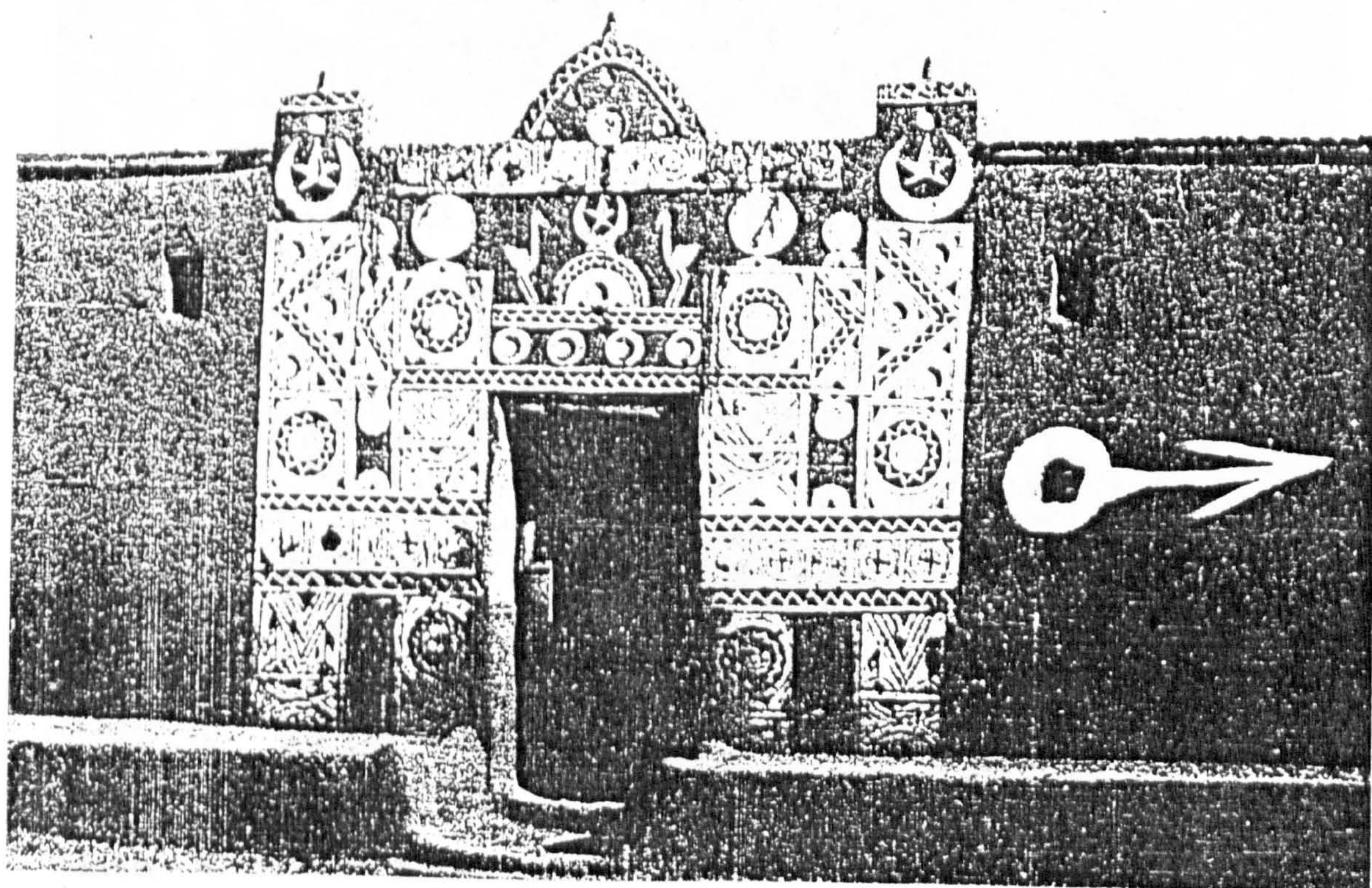


Plate A.22. The art and crafts work done by the Fadija women was an important element in the decoration of their houses.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)



Plates A.23. and A.24. (Above and below) The mud benches built along the front wall of the Fadija house where the men used to sit and entertain their guests.

(Source: FERNIA, op. cit.)

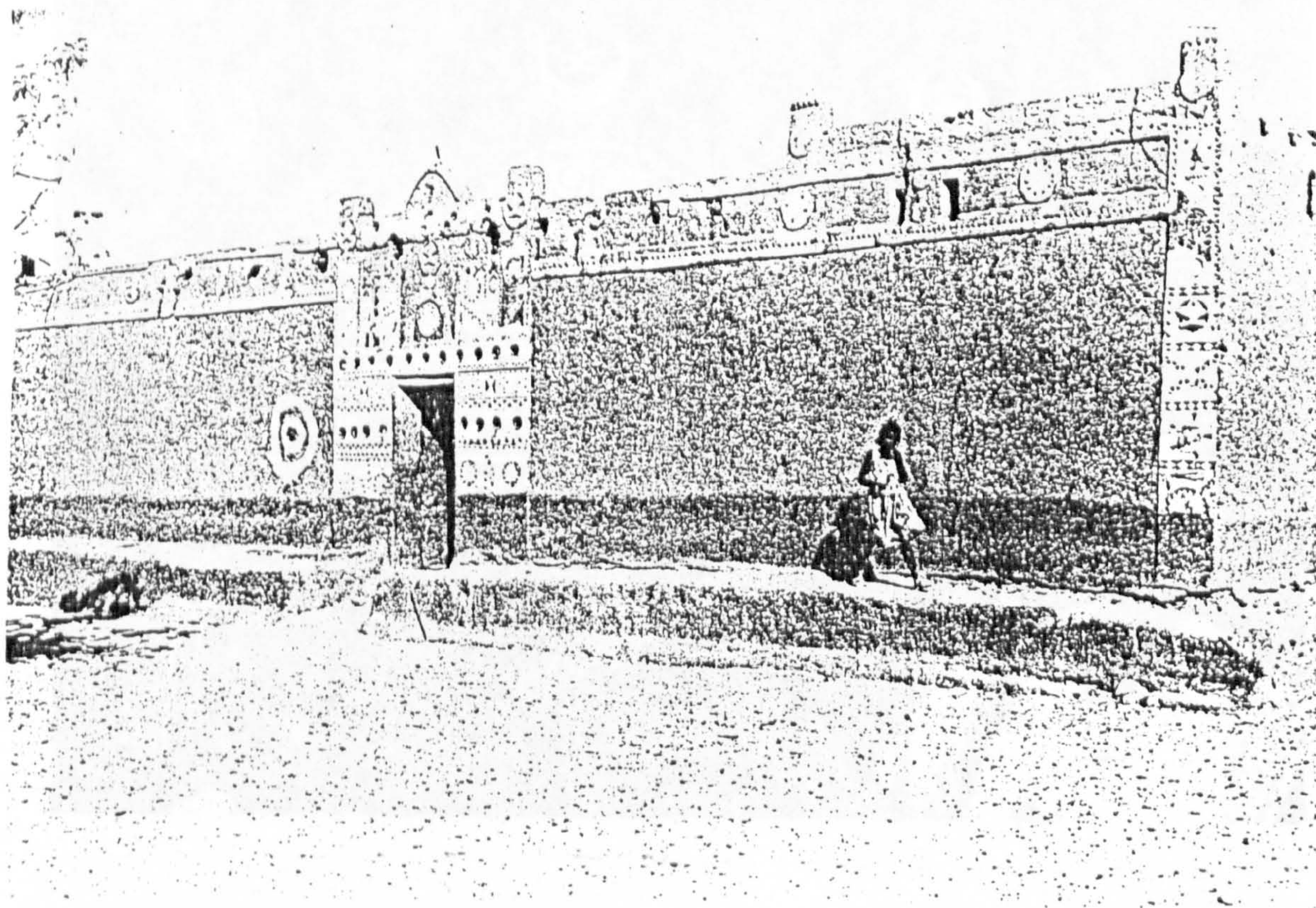
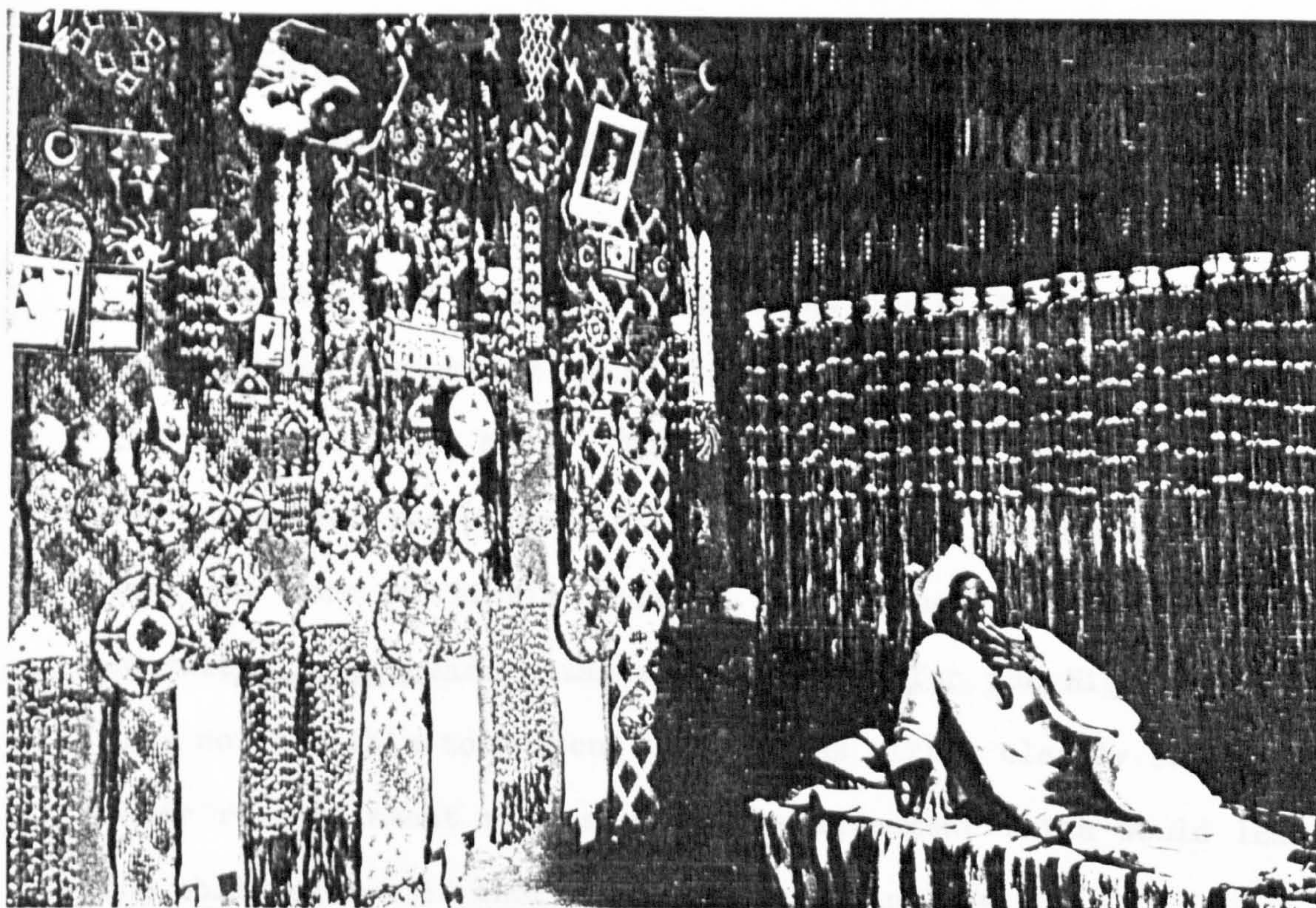


Plate A.24.



Plates A.25. and A.26. (Above and below) The Fadija accommodated their guests in the spacious and well decorated reception and guests room which formed an important part of their houses.

(Source: WENZEL, M., "House decoration in Nubia", Duckworth Company Limited, 1977.)



Plate A.26.

APPENDIX (B): THE PREPARATORY STAGES PRECEDING THE RE-SETTLEMENT OF THE SUDANESE NUBIANS.

The ambitious project for the High Dam of Aswan to be built by the Egyptian government meant the displacement of the majority of the people of Lower Nubia. The re-settlement of the Sudanese Nubians was considered the responsibility of their own government. This task was made more difficult because the Sudanese government was not consulted in the early stages of planning for the High Dam. It was thus not possible to present the Nubians with a clearly set plan for their re-settlement when signing the agreement which would lead to the obliteration of their home territory in 1959.⁽¹⁾

From the beginning the government felt the need to create a local body from amongst the Nubians to assist it in dealing with the re-settlement. In response to this a local committee chosen from the Nubians - the National Committee - was set up. The Commissioner of Wadi Halfa, at that time, commented that he believed that some important Nubian representatives were not included in this Committee due to certain prejudices.⁽²⁾

In February 1960, the Council of Ministers appointed a Commission in order to deal with the re-settlement of the Nubians. The Commission was composed of the Under-Secretaries of five ministries; the Ministry of Interior; Finance and Economics; Agriculture; Irrigation; and Public Works. The governor of one of the provinces was appointed as Chairman of the Commission. As he was a Nubian, and was a senior Civil Servant, this choice was

considered a wise one. One of the terms of reference of this Commission was to determine the standard of dwellings intended for the re-settlement of the Nubians.⁽³⁾

The Commission started its work by short-listing six sites which had to have their feasibility for re-settlement assessed. The sites were : Wadi el-Khawi in the Dongola area (along the Nile and south of Nubia); an area north of the Gezira Extension (to the south of Khartoum); el-Kadaru area north of Khartoum; the Managil Extension, in the western part of the Gezira Project; Wad el-Hadad, near Sennar; and Khashm el-Girba in Kassala Province (Fig. 2.2).⁽⁴⁾ The choice of Khashm el-Girba can be linked to a plan previously set up by the government to build a dam on a seasonal river - Atbara - which had as its intention the securing of irrigation and the cultivation of the fertile area. Settling the Nubians there would ensure that the area would be developed by experienced farmers.⁽⁵⁾

After selecting these sites, the Commission directed the government departments concerned to collect data about the conditions of weather, quality of soil, possibility of irrigation, and ease of communications with each one of the six sites. Thus, these constituted the main criteria upon which the final choice of the re-settlement site was based.⁽⁶⁾

As the government specialists were investigating the potentials of the selected sites, the Commission went ahead with its work and started contacting the Nubian people. In his address to these people, the Chairman of the Commission confirmed to them that they

would have the freedom to choose the site for their re-settlement. He then invited a deputation selected from their National Committee to meet and discuss the whole issue with the high government officials and technical advisors. The deputation visited Khartoum, and a meeting was arranged with the President. At this meeting, the President assured it that the government had resolved to compensate the Nubian people with a better home: that would have modern planning, high standard of services and a lively settlement scheme which would ensure good living standards for them and their descendents.⁽⁷⁾

As part of the efforts to involve the deputation in the decision making process of the re-settlement of their people, it was accompanied by government technical advisors in a tour to the six selected sites. During their visit to Khashm el-Girba they were taken to the site of the proposed dam on the river Atbara. For most of the deputation members, this was the first visit to the area. The landscape there consisted of a wide range of dunes of heavy, almost black soil, scarred and broken and naturally sculptured into strange shapes. This natural setting made a very unfavourable impression on the deputation members.⁽⁸⁾ One of them commented that it recalled to his mind "the exile in which Prophet Solomon impris~~o~~ned his Jinns".⁽⁹⁾

After their visits to the selected sites, the members of the deputation met with their people living in the Nubian villages and related to them their impressions. After a few days the deputation issued a proclamation containing all the facts about the selected

sites. This proclamation agreed on most of the points with a memorandum prepared by the Commission of the Re-settlement of the Nubians in its assessment of the six sites. One of the points of difference concerned the danger of the Kalazar - an endemic disease transferred by a certain type of fly which lives in Khashm el-Girba area - that was exaggerated by the proclamation. The proclamation also disagreed with the memorandum about the fertility of the soil of el-Kadaru which was rated high by the deputation. The disagreement was partly explained by the fact that the deputation did not rely on information furnished by government specialists but sought advice also from the Nubians working in various government departments.⁽¹⁰⁾

A few days after submitting the proclamation, the National Committee set a date and started the preparation for the voting process which would enable the Nubians to choose the site of their new home in a democratic way. As they waited in anticipation of this event, the outlooks of the people were varied. The difference of opinions grouped them into camps, each one assessing the situation in a way which served its own purposes. For example, the people of Deghim village, who were more sophisticated and affluent people than the inhabitants of the other Nubian villages, preferred the sites near to Khartoum el-Kadaru area and that which lay to the north of the Gezira Extension. In response to this, they tried by all possible means to influence a decision in favour of those two sites. A large sector of the population of Ashkeit and Debeira preferred Khashm el-Girba. The people of Sara, Akasha and a large number of those of Debeira opted for Wadi el-Khawi. The non-Nubian elements

who inhabited the major town of Wadi Halfa leaned towards Khashm el-Girba.⁽¹¹⁾

The Chairman of the Re-settlement Committee, who was a Nubian, was convinced that the site of Wadi el-Khawi was the most suitable one for his people. This was because the climate of this area was dry and similar to that of Nubia to which the people were accustomed, and it would be possible to rebuild the Nubian house types at a reasonable cost using mud and mud bricks. In addition to this, by re-settling the Nubians in this area, they would not feel socially or culturally alienated because the Dangalla who lived nearby (Fig. 1.5) were essentially of the same Nubian origin. Out of his convictions, the Chairman worked very hard from the beginning to push for the choice of this site.⁽¹²⁾

Confronted with the clashing points of views and different opinions about the issue of re-settlement and choice of the site for the new home, the ordinary Nubian was at a loss and could not decide which option was the best. The conflict in the whole area was aggravated by propaganda which led to high levels of tension. While this was taking place in Nubia, the Commission was finalising its memorandum before submitting it to the Minister of Interior to allow him to choose the appropriate site for the re-settlement.⁽¹³⁾

At last the long period of intrigue and lobbying came to an end and the voting took place under strict scrutiny. Expressed in terms of percentage of the overall votes cast, the result was as follows: Kadaru area 43.4%; North Gezira Extension (south of Khartoum) 29.3%

Wadi el-Khawi (Dongola area) 16.9%; Khashm el-Girba 7.6%; Senner area 0.05%; Managil 0.0% Abstentions 2.7%. It was clear from these figures that no camp had an over-riding majority. None had won ever half of the votes.⁽¹⁴⁾

Before sending the results to the Commission in Khartoum the Commission of Wadi Halfa commented on them saying that although that they could not be considered as a true expression of the wishes of all the Nubians, they should be given consideration. After the results were communicated to Khartoum, the Nubians resumed their normal calm life, but were anxiously awaiting the reaction of the government to the results of the vote.⁽¹⁵⁾

Based on the memorandum submitted to him by the Commission of Re-settlement, the Minister of Interior selected the site of Khashm el-Girba. He justified his choice by quoting the fertility of the soil in the area and its suitability for growing various cash crops, as well as the topography of land which facilitated irrigation by the waters of the dam intended to be built on the river Atbara. He also justified his choice by the fact that the area was not populated, thus the provision of public and social services to the Nubians would not affect other people.⁽¹⁶⁾ After three months, the Council of Ministers announced its final decision about the re-settlement site and chose the Khashm el-Girba area despite the disagreement of the Nubians.⁽¹⁷⁾

The decision of the Council of Ministers was seen as a strategy to involve the Nubians in development plans already set up by the

government. The re-settling of these people in the fertile land around the proposed dam there, would ensure the development of that area by experienced farmers.⁽¹⁸⁾

In the statement in which it declared the choice of the site of Khashm el-Girba, the Council of Ministers pointed out that this choice was made because it ensured the satisfaction of the main requirements of the Nubians. It ensured them freehold to irrigated land in an area which had good potential for industry and which was well connected to other parts of the country. According to the statement, this site allowed also the construction of houses of a reasonable standard.⁽¹⁹⁾ Moreover, it facilitated the provision of social, health and security services exceeding those which were already available in Nubia. The statement also expressed the concern of the Council of Ministers about the future of the Nubians.⁽²⁰⁾

Despite this declaration of the Council of Ministers, the Nubians still hoped that the government might change its mind. Consequently, they continued to send petitions through the National Committee to the authorities in Khartoum expressing their discontent with the choice of the re-settlement site. These petitions were reinforced by several of the environmental aspects of the re-settlement area. The Nubians feared the endemic diseases such as the Bilharzia and Kala-azar.⁽²¹⁾ They also feared the climate of the area which is famous for its terrific sand storms, thunder, lightning and torrential tropical rainfall.⁽²²⁾ This is quite understandable from people who had an ingrained fear of rain and thunder.⁽²³⁾ Furthermore, the peaceful Nubians feared the aggressive

tribes who lived around the area - such as the Beja⁽²⁴⁾ and Shukria⁽²⁵⁾ - among whom highwaymen were hailed as tribal heroes.

The fears of the Nubians about these aspects in the re-settlement area were intensified by their departure from the blessed land of Nubia, and the imminent obliteration of the tombs of their holy men by the rising waters of the Nile.⁽²⁶⁾ Their deep concern about security in their new home was expressed in one of their petitions to the government officials in Khartoum. In this petition they put it as a condition that they should know, prior to their transfer, the type of dwellings intended for their accommodation there.⁽²⁷⁾

The choice of the site of Khashm el-Girba further exacerbated the resentment of the Nubians against their government and this led to political disturbances in Wadi Halfa and Khartoum. These soon subsided, but were succeeded by stubborn forms of passive resistance which continued for some years. The feeling of bitterness about leaving Nubia was expressed in emotional songs composed by local poets. It was expressed also in a period of mourning during which weddings and other celebrations were cancelled.⁽²⁸⁾

In the end the Nubians accepted re-settlement in Khashm el-Girba. This was mainly a response to an announcement made by the government that the people had the freedom to settle where they wished and that compensations would be paid also to those who moved to other areas than those officially chosen for re-settlement. The Nubians feared that the response of the people to this announcement

would lead to their dispersal in various parts of the country. Accordingly, they decided that they should move together to Khashm el-Girba in order to maintain their unity.⁽²⁹⁾

When the Nubians agreed to be transferred to Khashm el-Girba, time was running short, and the re-settlement process had to be stepped up before the flooding of the area by the year 1965. A new Chairman was appointed to replace the first Nubian head of the Commission of Re-settlement who resigned out of discontent with government policies. The new Chairman started his job by visiting Nubia where he met with the inhabitants. He informed them about the general characteristics of the regional and village planning, as well as the house types which the government intended to prepare for their accommodation in the new area.⁽³⁰⁾

Regarding the regional planning of the re-settlement area, the Chairman told the inhabitants that the villages would be well distributed in the whole area, as they would be located at a distance of 5 km. from one another. A new major town would be planned and built to replace the border town of Wadi Halfa in Nubia. This town would be located in the centre of the re-settlement area, and the distance separating it from the villages located at the edge of the area would not exceed 20 km. Commenting upon the planning of the whole region, the Chairman assured the inhabitants that it had an advantage over the linear one in Nubia. Regarding the planning of individual villages, he informed them that this would follow modern trends (Plate B.1.), and that every village would be equipped with public and social services.⁽³¹⁾

Concerning the construction of the dwellings intended for re-settlement, the Chairman told the people that they would be built of cement blocks and roofed with permanent materials. During his stay in Nubia, the Chairman visited some houses and acquainted himself with their existing accommodation. This was considered an important step towards ensuring that the essential requirements of the people would be incorporated into the design of their future dwellings.⁽³²⁾

After the return of the Chairman to Khartoum an advertisement was published calling for international tenders for the planning of the major town and villages, as well as for the design of the houses in the re-settlement area. In July 1961 a contract was signed with a German engineering firm. By the first week of August the representatives of this firm arrived in Wadi Halfa with proposals showing the planning and design concepts and construction materials. Throughout these initial planning and design stages and up until the actual construction of the buildings, the whole process had been supervised by government specialists.⁽³³⁾

In Nubia, the Commissioner of Wadi Halfa invited the more educated and enlightened of the Nubians to discuss the planning and design proposals with the German consultants. During the discussion, it was agreed that the houses should be built along an east-west axis in order to enhance natural ventilation. To insulate the houses, and make them cool during summer and warm during winter, the consultants suggested that the walls should be built of hollow bricks and the roof of asbestos sheets. This suggestion was

appreciated by the Nubians. The discussion then considered the type of accommodation provided in each house. According to the proposal, each house was to consist of two rooms, a verandah, a kitchen, store and toilet. Moreover, each housing plot was to be surrounded by boundary walls of concrete slabs about 2.25 metres high. At first the Nubians argued that the number of living rooms were not sufficient for an average family. But this objection was dropped due to the high cost of construction.⁽³⁴⁾

Slightly more than a month after the visit of the representatives of the German consulting group to Nubia, the Commissioner of Wadi Halfa received an album containing a complete set of planning and design drawings of the re-settlement area.⁽³⁵⁾ The village planning was based on a gridion pattern. It was also symmetrical and very regular. In a similar way, the dwelling had to be built according to a single design or house type.⁽³⁶⁾

The Commission of Wadi Halfa toured the Nubian villages and showed the inhabitants the planning and design drawings. He commented that, they expressed their interest and were satisfied.⁽³⁷⁾ By that time the first steps towards the setting out and construction of the re-settlement project had already started. The whole process had to be speeded up.⁽³⁸⁾ Thirty two villages and a major town - which was named New Halfa - had to be constructed in slightly more than two years before the rising Nile waters started to flood the Nubian villages.

As the specialists, contractors and workers were putting the

finishing touches to the re-settlement scheme, the Nubians were preparing to leave their homeland finally. The 6th January, 1964 marked the departure of the first emigration train. By 23rd November in the same year the last village was cleared from the Wadi Halfa area. A total of 23,570 persons emigrated and the whole emigration came to a close. (39)

In general terms, Khashm el-Girba area and the re-settlement scheme prepared for the Nubians was in sharp contrast to Nubia and its traditional villages. Regarding the difference between the two areas and the impression of the re-settlement area on the Nubians we quote Little who says that;

"The initial reaction of the Sudanese Nubians to their new homes was much the same as that of their kinsmen in Egypt. The first view of the re-settlement area was drab and inhospitable to them, used as they were to the rich green palm groves, the rocky banks and islets of the Nile and the rolling sand hills enclosing their private world and straggling villages which might have grown out of the ground. The flat and open landscape of the re-settlement area left them without protection and the uniform rectangular villages with their straight streets and central square lacked the liveable untidiness the Nubians were used to. The re-settlement area ... was dreadfully inhuman in appearance. The Nubians, at Khashm el-Girba, found themselves in the midst of people who were manifestly aggressive, more primitive and traditional than themselves. The climate, as well was no less hostile." (40)

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1. ADAMS, W.Y., "Nubia: Corridor to Africa". Allen Lane, 1977, p.659.
2. DAFALLA, H., "The Nubian Exodus". Khartoum University Press, Khartoum, 1975, p.111.

3. Ibid., p.111.
4. Ibid., p.104.
5. ADAMS, op. cit., p.625.
6. DAFALLA, op. cit., p.105.
7. Ibid., p.112.
8. Ibid., p.112.
9. Ibid., p.113.
10. Ibid., p.110.
11. Ibid., p.112.
12. Ibid., p.112.
13. Ibid., p.109.
14. Ibid., p.118.
15. Ibid., p.120.
16. ABDALLA, S.I., "The Choice of Khashm El-Girba for Resettling the Nubians". Sudan Notes and Records, Khartoum, 1967.
17. Ibid., p.67.
18. ADAMS, op. cit., p.625.
19. Sand and gravel, important ingredients for producing cement mortar and reinforced concrete building components, were available in abundance at the banks of the river Atbara.
20. DAFALLA, op. cit., pp.128-129.
21. Ibid., p.128.
22. Ibid., pp.250-251.
23. For more details about the climate of the re-settlement area refer to BARBOUR, J. "The Republic of the Sudan". Oxford University Press, 1965, pp.80-84.
24. The Beni Amir Beja who inhabited the area are an aggressive and warlike tribe. Due to this, the British who ruled the Sudan

during the 1940's employed them in order to stop the progress of the Italians who tried to invade the eastern Sudan from Eriteria (PAUL, A., "A History of the Beja Tribes of the Sudan") Cambridge University Press, 1954, pp.

25. The Shukria are a warlike tribe and this is indicated by their folk poetry which focuses on the military achievements of the tribe and its famous warriors.
26. LITTLE, "The High Dam of Aswan", p.136.
27. ABDALLA, op. cit., p.69.
28. Ibid., p.66.
29. Ibid., p.72.
30. DAFALLA, p.144.
31. Ibid., p.144.
33. Ibid., p.145.
34. Ibid., p.145.
35. Ibid., p.146.
36. Ibid., p.146.
37. Ibid., p.146.
38. Ibid., p.146.
39. Ibid., p.271.
40. ADAMS, op. cit., p.663.

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